

UC-NRLF



B 2 803 244



BERKELEY

LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA







SEYMOUR HARRANGING THE CREW OF THE ALBATROSS FROM THE QUARTER DECK.

"Now men, give one cheer to show you are all satisfied and then, to work with a will, and use out the guns, below."

THE

LOW STOCK

CABIN BOY'S STORY:

A Semi-Nautical Romance,

FOUNDED ON FACT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "PIRATE DOCTOR," "THE LAWYER'S STORY,"
"THE OLD DOCTOR," ETC., ETC.

NEW YORK:

GARRETT & CO., PUBLISHERS,

18 ANN STREET.

LOAN STACK

ENTERED according to Act of Congress, in the year 1854, by A. J. Williamson, for
THE AUTHOR,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court, for the Southern District of New York.

PS
2359
M647
C3
1854
MAIN

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

A PREFACE is generally considered to be a necessary appendage to a book. It is true that some readers pass it over with a psha ! indicative of contempt ; nevertheless there are others who would consider a book incomplete without it.

In the following story the author has endeavored, under the garb of fiction to embody various romantic facts, which have come under his notice in the course of his early wanderings. He does not pretend to insult his readers by asserting that he has strictly adhered to literal facts. The veriest tyro in romance reading would know that this were impossible, even if it were desirable. No person, even in recounting historical truths, can adhere to the letter of actual fact. Such and such things he may know to have occurred at certain periods. It rests with him to show in what way they were brought about ; to relate a conversation here, to speak of a fact which happened there, and, so to speak, to dovetail the fiction and the fact together in such a manner that the one may reasonably bring about, or explain the cause of the other, and according to the skill with which he has effected this depends the excellence of his work. Whether or not, in the present instance, the author

has succeeded, he leaves to the judgment of his readers. With regard to the plot of the story, the following explanations as to the origin of some of the characters may be acceptable.

Some years since, it was the fortune of the author to fall in with a sea captain whose characteristics he has endeavored to portray in his delineation of Seymour. This erratic individual commanded a ship of his own, and during his early peregrinations he had fallen in with, purchased, educated, and eventually married a Greek girl, almost literally under the circumstances detailed in the narrative. Guided by eccentricity in all his actions, he resolved, as much as possible, to isolate this lady from society, and he actually kept her for many years almost secluded from the world. The author met her on board her husband's ship, and was much delighted with her extraordinary personal beauty and the innocence and amiability of her disposition, as was every one who saw her. She, some few years after her marriage, came to an untimely end, and her husband, who really loved her to distraction, did not long survive her.

With regard to those portions of the story which illustrate the method of slave dealing on the African coast, the author has merely presented disconnected facts in a connected manner. King Kettle and the Loango Chiefs, are living illustrations of the native slave dealers on the coast, and their portraiture is drawn from life—"nothing extenuate."

As to the character of Mr. Mordant the author has endeavored to portray the vraisemblance of one of those men, by no means scarce in our community, who, while professing to be

actuated by philanthropy in their hatred of the system of southern slavery and their open admiration of the principles of abolitionism, are really and truly interested in procuring slaves for the Cuban market, and it is a well known fact, that vessels have cleared from this and other ports, with false papers, whose destiny was to the coast, for the purpose of procuring negroes.

The author has not ventured to discuss the question of slavery, as it at present exists in this country. He is fully aware that all argument on that subject is vain, and that very much evil has arisen from the ill directed zeal of Abolitionists, whose efforts only seem to exasperate the slaveholder and to bind faster the fetters of the slave. Slavery as it at present exists in the southern portion of this Union is an evil that can never be eradicated by violent diatribe, and it is equally as certain that the efforts made to prevent the kidnapping of negroes from Africa, have led and do lead still to greater hardships being inflicted upon the unhappy wretches thus ruthlessly torn from their homes, although the use of steamers upon the coast has rendered, of late years, the practice of slave catching, more hazardous than it has been heretofore.

The Cabin Boy, in this narrative has told his own story, very little varnished, or exaggerated ; he has had little occasion to do so ; for to use a hackneyed yet veritable phrase, " Truth is strange—stranger than fiction."

With this explanation, he gives the story to his readers.

New York, August 1st, 1854.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
Ho! for California—Shipping Hands for the new El Dorado.....	13

CHAPTER II.

The reader is introduced to a New York merchant and his family	
—The mysterious disappearance of Jane Miller.....	19

CHAPTER III.

The Albatross sails from New York, and the secret object of her voyage becomes known	24
--	----

CHAPTER IV.

Showing how the slave trade is maintained, and exposing the heartlessness engendered by fashion.....	38
--	----

CHAPTER V.

The origin of the Cabin Boy, and a brief history of his family—leaving more to be explained hereafter.....	45
--	----

CHAPTER VI.

The Albatross on her voyage—Harry is startled by discovering a locket containing the portrait of a beautiful female in the captain's cabin, and discovers the original in the Recluse of Annabon	54
--	----

CHAPTER VII.

A letter from a correspondent of Mr. Mordant's at Sierra Leone—	
Another anonymous letter received by the Widow Miller—	
A letter from Captain Seymour, denying any knowledge of	
the abduction of Jane Miller—Some account of the widow's	
family—Charles Mordant endeavors to obtain money on the	
security of his expectations.....	70

CHAPTER VIII.

Which introduces the reader to Zuleika's abode on the Island of	
Annabon—Interview between Captain Seymour, King Kettle,	
and the Loango chiefs—The <i>Yunga Jagos</i> woman and her	
children—The infants cast to the lions in the canebrake.....	76

CHAPTER IX.

The Birth and Parentage of Seymour—His first meeting with	
Zuleika in the Slave Market at Constantinople—He resolves	
to Educate and then to Marry the Greek Girl—The Deception	
of Antorine Dichet and the Consequences thereof—Seymour	
engages in the Slave Trade—Marries Zuleika, and finds her	
a secluded Home on the Island of Annabon.....	87

CHAPTER X.

Zuleika's bower—Harry Davis's secret is, by accident, discovered	
by the Greek girl.....	99

CHAPTER XI.

Captain Junot relates his mishaps in consequence of falling in	
with a cruiser—Captain Seymour visits Annabon—The secret	
is kept from him—Harry is left with Zuleika—A slave drove	
—The <i>Yunga Jagos</i> woman and the lions in the canebrake—	
Seymour nearly catches a Tartar....	108

CHAPTER XII.

- The departure of the young midshipman on his first voyage to sea
 —The peculiarities of Mr. Mordant's views regarding slave
 dealing on the coast of Africa..... 123

CHAPTER XIII.

- Frank Martin's dangerous escape from the slaver—His rescue
 from the wreck by the G——, frigate—Miss Herbert is in-
 troduced to the reader..... 128

CHAPTER XIV.

- The origin of the Mystery of the Rings..... 140

CHAPTER XV.

- Showing how Mr. Mordant obtained possession of the Widow's Pro-
 perty 145

CHAPTER XVI.

- A Shark Story—The Mystery of the Recluse of the Island of
 Annabon..... 160

CHAPTER XVII.

- A Surprise and somewhat of a Mystery arising out of the Visit
 to the White Lady of Annabon, and still more Mystery
 arising out of the Interview..... 172

CHAPTER XVIII.

- Junot's diabolical Vengeance—A Pampero disables the Slaver,
 which is captured by a Cruiser, and Junot and his crew are
 carried to Sierra Leone to take their Trial..... 189

CHAPTER XIX.

- Seymour revisits Annabon, and finds an unwelcome visitor..... 205

CHAPTER XX.

- The Sinking of the Portuguese Schooner—Zuleika Departs from the Island of Annabon—The Destruction of the Cottage by Fire..... 209

CHAPTER XXI.

- Mr. Mordant displays his Charity in the midst of his Misfortunes—He meets with a severe Domestic Affliction..... 225

CHAPTER XXII.

- Which treats of Strange Matters, involving not a little Mystery.. 234

CHAPTER XXIII.

- Wherein the Scenes depicted are laid in another quarter of the Globe—The Reader is introduced to Zuleika's new home.... 242

CHAPTER XXIV.

- The Meeting with Marca—The Ancient Sibyl of the Archipelago, and her Daughter Zoe..... 247

CHAPTER XXV.

- The Return of Charlotte Herbert, and her Introduction into Mr. Wilson's Family—What arises therefrom..... 260

CHAPTER XXVI.

- An Essay on Familiarity with Death—Captain James is Rewarded for his Kindness to the *Yunga Jagos* Negress..... 268

CHAPTER XXVII.

- Some further Mystery, leading to an Unexpected Dénoûment, arising out of the Rings..... 274

CHAPTER XXVIII.

- The Birth of Zuleika's Infant—Some Account of the Parentage of Zuleika..... 282

CHAPTER XXIX.

- In which King Kettle shows that he possesses as great Skill in Diplomacy as more Civilized Potentates—Mr. Mordant hears more Unwelcome News, and receives a visit from the Yankee Mate, Tolcroft..... 289

CHAPTER XXX.

- Frank Martin Returns Home, and has an Interview with Seymour, during which some Strange Revelations are made..... 309

CHAPTER XXXI.

- Marca and Zoe relate the Events which occurred during their long Separation from each other—Seymour's Return to Zuleika's Isle..... 320

CHAPTER XXXII.

- Which treats of Domestic Matters—Sarah Mordant finds she has made a bad bargain—Mr. Harvey displays his cunning, with advantage to himself..... 328

CHAPTER XXXIII.

- Which describes various Unexpected Interviews 340

CHAPTER XXXIV.

- Seymour's first sight of his Child—Jane Miller discovers herself to Seymour..... 351

CHAPTER XXXV.

- Marie makes her Escape from her Guardian, and is Rescued by Captain de Sylva..... 363

CHAPTER XXXVI.

- The reader is introduced to Abdallah, the Greek Pirate Chief—the interview between Abdallah and Zoe..... 173

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Gale in the Ægean Sea—The meeting of De Sylva and Seymour—Zuleika begs her Husband to become a Christian—Death of Zuleika and her Child.....	378
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The last of Zuleika—Her Burial on the Island, and the Departure of Seymour and Jane Miller for Odessa, on board the Petrel..	413
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Which treats of various Characters—and Commences to wind up the Story.....	422
--	-----

CHAPTER XL.

The Conclusion.....	433
---------------------	-----

THE CABIN BOY'S STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "PIRATE DOCTOR," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Ho! for California—Shipping Hands for the new El Dorado.

THE astounding discovery of the auriferous treasure buried beneath the soil of the long-considered barren desert of California, created an unwonted stir amongst the shipping in the port of New York, as well as in every other port in the United States; for every merchant, who could by any means manage to do so, was eager to possess himself of a share of the almost fabulous wealth then for the first time laid bare to the cupidity of mankind; consequently all the vessels that could be obtained, were readily freighted for the shores of the "land of golden promise." Freights increased in value—there was a rise in seamen's wages—a scarcity of seamen for every other destination, and a proportionable increase in everything connected with the shipping interest.

One fine summer's evening, shortly after the news had burst upon the world, and men had satisfied themselves that they were not dreaming or listening to an exaggerated story, there was an unusual bustle in a well known shipping office for seamen, in the vicinity of the East River; for the proprietor had within a few days received almost unlimited requisitions from divers ship-owners and masters, to procure crews for their vessels. The office was thronged to excess with seamen, "Outward bounders," as, in nautical parlance, Jack is termed, when he has run his tether to its full length ashore, and having spent the hard earned wages of months, and sometimes of years, in a few days, finds himself snubbed by his landlady and

looked shy upon by the fair, but frail nymphs, in the sunshine of whose favors he so lately basked.

But, strange to say, there was not that seeming anxiety amongst the men to get a berth, almost without regard to the place of their destination, that was customary when the throng was so great. The hardy fellows rather seemed to hang back—albeit, they had not “a shot left in the locker”—and to feel a desire to pick and choose with all the nicety and independence of a cautious “Homeward bounder,” determined to take warning from past follies and mishaps, and go to sea again before his pockets had been drained by land sharks in the shape of landlords, tavern keepers, sharpers, long-shore-men, cyprians *et hoc genus omne*. Let us listen awhile to what was going on, and we may be able to understand how this happened. A stout, burly, black whiskered, weather-beaten, and yet, withal, good-tempered looking man, walked into the office, elbowed his way through the crowd of sailors, and approaching the shipping master, said, “Good morning Mr. Sharply—have you got my crew all ready? We haul out at four o’clock this afternoon, and I must have the men all on board by that time.”

“I am sorry to say captain,” replied the shipping master, “that there are six hands wanting yet. ’Pon my word, in all my experience I never saw such a difficulty in procuring sailors for these northern voyages.” Then, raising his voice, and addressing the assembled seamen, he shouted—

“Now, lads, who’s for a trip to Antwerp in the ‘Mermaid?’—Fine ship—A—1—good captain—first-rate provisions—tip-top wages, and a capital time of year for the voyage. Six hands wanted, at two dollars a month above ordinary wages.”

There was no reply to these tempting offers. Two or three men seemed half-inclined to come forward; but they drew back again—a low conversation was kept up amidst the throng for a few minutes, and then all was silent.

The captain and the shipping master both looked disappointed, but in the course of a few minutes, the former left the office saying *sotto voce* to the shipping master, as he turned to go away—

“Mr. Sharply, you *must* get me six men by four o’clock, by hook or by crook—some way or other; even if you have still to increase the wages.”

Scarcely had the captain of the Antwerp ship left the office before another captain entered. He saluted the shipping master familiarly, and asked if his crew was ready.

"Hardly yet," replied the latter smiling, "hardly yet, captain. I only received your order an hour ago—but I shall have no difficulty in procuring you a first-rate crew immediately."

"Who wants to go to San Francisco," continued he, addressing the sailors, "I want fourteen hands for the Flying Fish, to sail to-morrow morning?"

Scarcely had the words escaped his lips, before there was a rush to the desk of twice the number of hands wanted, all eager to register their names for the voyage. The requisite crew was soon procured, and it was not until the day began to grow late, and there appeared no more prospect of any fresh calls for California voyages, that any desire was expressed to ship on board other vessels. Then, however, the men who were left, thrust their hands disconsolately into their empty pockets, and began to think of the cool reception they were likely to meet with at their boarding-houses, and after some cogitation, reluctantly expressed their readiness to take such chances as still offered themselves, and by this means, the requisite crews for the less popular voyages were procured.

The office was considerably thinned of its numbers ; indeed, but very few remained, and most of these rather stayed from curiosity, than from any immediate desire to procure ships, and the shipping master was beginning to think of closing his office for the night, for it was growing dark, when a tall, dark, and exceedingly handsome young man, a seaman evidently—his bronzed complexion told that—but having the martial bearing of an officer of the navy, rather than a merchant captain, entered the office.

He saluted the shipping master as the others had done before him, and then put the same question to him with regard to his crew—

"No, Captain Seymour," replied the shipping master, "since you are so extremely particular with regard to the crew you wish to ship, I had rather that you would pick out the men yourself. If you will call to-morrow, I will have some that I think will suit you on hand, and will then let you explain matters to them. Let me see, you are bound to——"

"To—Acapulco—and—and to California," replied the captain, with a strange hesitation in his speech. "You know the kind of men I want ; none of your milksop—half and half fellows—but thorough sea dogs—every one of them ; fellows that will stand any hardship, and do any amount of fighting, if it be necessary."

"I understand you, Captain Seymour," replied the shipping master ; and I have had my eye for some days past on just such a set of men as you require ; but, as I said before, you had better call in the morning and arrange matters for yourself."

"I will do so," replied the captain ; and wishing the shipping master "Good-night," he left the office.

Just before the last-mentioned captain had entered, a young, delicate-looking, but very dark-complexioned lad had joined the crowd of seamen. He was evidently anxious to procure a berth, and was about to press forward to the shipping master's desk, when, observing Captain Seymour, he was apparently seized with a nervous timidity, which had been sufficiently manifest before to attract the notice, and call forth the coarse jokes of the rude seamen who were standing near him, and he shrunk back again in a corner, evidently endeavoring to escape notice. He had not been perceived by the shipping master, and yet it appeared that he had been a previous applicant at the office for a berth, for after the captain had retired, the shipping master, as he stepped down from his desk to clear out and close the office, recognised him, and said—

"Ha ! Davis—you here ? I didn't see you before. Wait a moment till I close the shutters. I want to speak with you."

The lad did as he was desired ; and when the shipping master had closed all up, he returned to his desk, lit a candle, and called the lad to him.

"You want to go to California, you say, Davis. I have two or three crews to ship for vessels bound for San Francisco, to-morrow or next day ; be on hand, and perhaps I may be able to get you a berth. You have been to sea before ?"

"No Sir !" timidly replied the lad, "that is to say," he continued, "I have once made a voyage to and fro between New York and Liverpool."

"Indeed ! Why, to look at your sun-burnt face, one would have thought you had been a cruise to the West Indies, or some part of the tropics. Well, come to-morrow, and I will see what can be done."

"I should like to get a berth on board the Albatross," said the lad.

"On board the Albatross ! Why, my boy, I think you are hardly fitted to make one of *her* crew. Why did you not speak to Captain Seymour when he was here just now ?"

"I was afraid," replied the lad, "I wish you would speak for me. I did go and ask the mate, and he told me you had the shipping of the crew."

"Why not any other vessel bound to California, as well as the Albatross?"

"I have taken a fancy to go in the Albatross with Captain Seymour," replied the lad, blushing deeply through his bronzed cheeks as he spoke, although the shipping-master did not perceive the blush.

"Well, I will do what I can for you, for I like your looks; but I can give you but little hope; however, come here at nine o'clock to-morrow morning, and I will speak to Captain Seymour about you. You might answer for his cabin boy, perhaps."

The youth left the office, and proceeded to his boarding-house, which was not one of those frequented by seamen, but one of a superior sort, where he had had possession of a room for a week. He walked on with hurried steps, holding his head down, and striving apparently to escape notice. The shipping master observed this, for he had closed the office and was following the youth at a short distance.

"There is something mysterious about that boy," he said to himself—"It's my belief he's running away from home. His looks show that he comes of a better class than sailor boys in general. Some young scamp, I suppose, who has taken a freak into his head, which a rough voyage or so will soon put out again; however, he's a smart-looking boy—strange he should so particularly desire to go in the Albatross. I should hardly think *he* would be of much use on board *her*; still, I'll give him a chance."

On the following morning, according to appointment, the captain of the Albatross called at the shipping office and selected his hands, and a hard, ill-favored looking set they were, and an uncommonly numerous crew the captain shipped. When at length he was satisfied, the shipping master directed his attention to the boy, who had called as he had been directed on the previous evening, but who, notwithstanding his anxiety to ship on board the Albatross, had kept himself in the back-ground, as though he shrunk from the ordeal of examination. "Oh, by the bye, captain, now you are satisfied with your crew, do you think you can find room for this lad; he has a particular desire to sail in the Albatross."

"I don't think he'll be of much service to me," replied the captain, "I want no more hands on board my ship than can catch mice." He was turning away when he appeared struck with something in the appearance of the boy, for he gazed at him earnestly and inquired, "What is your name, boy?"

"Henry Davis, sir."

"Well, Henry, I may want a lad to mix my grog for me, in fine weather. I don't suppose for some time to come, you'll be much use ; but I will give you a berth as cabin boy. What say you—will that suit you?"

"Yes, sir," replied the youth, his eyes beaming with delight, "I shall be glad to accept the berth."

"Well, then, be in readiness with the rest of the crew this afternoon ; or stay, is your *kit* all ready?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well then, go on board at once, and tell the mate I sent you."

The youth did as he was desired, and in the evening of the same day the Albatross was hauled out into the stream. Two or three loungers on the pier wondered to themselves what a vessel bound to Acapulco and California, needed so many water casks for ; for at the very last moment a barge load of "shakings," as staves and hoops for the manufacture of casks are called, was taken on board ; and other remarks were made respecting the number of the crew ; some said, jokingly, that the captain meant to fill the casks with gold dust—and one or two knowing fellows whispered that they had heard there was no insurance upon the vessel, which was strange for so fine a ship ; but the Albatross was soon out in the stream, and the loungers and lookers-on returned home.

CHAPTER II.

The reader is introduced to a New York merchant and his family. The mysterious disappearance of Jane Miller.

A FEW weeks prior to the date of the occurrences recorded in the preceding chapter, a large party was assembled at the splendid residence of an extensive and wealthy ship-owner, situated in one of the most fashionable localities in the upper portion of the city.

Seated on a sofa at one end of the large apartment that was thrown open for dancing, were two young ladies, daughters of the merchant, whom we will call Mordant. Near them were two other ladies, one of whom had just left off playing on the piano-forte, and the other was engaged in languidly turning over the leaves of a Book of Beauty, which lay upon a side-table near by.

"I am glad you've found time to stop jingling away at the piano, Ellen," said Sarah Mordant, the elder of the sisters to her cousin, Ellen Urquhart. "Come, now, give us your opinion of Captain Seymour. Isn't he handsome?"

"He is a charming young man," said Ellen, "so gentlemanly, and such an elegant dancer."

"And what a sweet moustache, and what lovely black eyes and curly hair he has," said Adeline, the other cousin, whose interest in the Book of Beauty seemed to have departed now Captain Seymour had become the theme of her cousin's and her sister's conversation.

"I wonder what he can see to admire so much in Jane Miller," said Mary, the younger daughter of the merchant, joining in the conversation—"I wish mamma wouldn't ask Jane here when Captain Seymour is coming—he directs all his attention to her. It's hardly polite."

"I saw him waltzing with you to-night, Mary," interposed Adeline.

"Yes—just for one waltz, and then back he went to Jane and asked her hand for the next dance. It is so always. I have no patience with him."

"I can't think what he so admires in Jane," said Sarah Mordant; "I don't think her pretty."

"Pretty! no indeed," exclaimed the other ladies, in a breath, and with a toss of their own beautiful heads, and Mary added—

"I am sure there are many in the room whose charms quite eclipse those of Jane Miller.

Several gentlemen now came up and solicited the honor of being the partners of the discontented belles for the next dance, and the conversation was for the time suspended.

While they are thus engaged we will introduce Jane Miller to the reader, and explain the origin of her intimacy with the beau of the evening—the envy of his own sex and the admired of the fair—the gay, handsome and gallant Captain Seymour.

Notwithstanding the remarks of the young ladies in disparagement of Jane Miller's personal attractions, she was, in reality a very pretty girl, of perhaps eighteen years of age. She was the daughter of a widow lady at this time on a visit to some friends in New York and its vicinity; but whose abode was in one of the New England States, near the sea-shore, where she owned a small farm which ensured her a competence, though a very small one. Jane's father, who had been a clergyman, had died when she was still a child, and the widow was left with a son and daughter. The son was the younger of the two, and was, at this period, still at school, studying for the naval service. Mr. Mordant, whose wife was the sister of the late Mr. Miller, (hence the intimacy of the family) had promised to procure a midshipman's appointment for the youth, as soon as he had completed his studies. Mrs. Miller was residing at this time near Jersey City, but she with her daughter had been invited to the ball.

Captain Seymour was the commander of one of Mr. Mordant's vessels, and for some reason unknown, was treated by the merchant on terms of equality not accorded to any other captains in his employ. There were many surmises regarding the cause of this favor. Some said that Captain Seymour was himself a relative of the family; others, that, although captain of a merchantman, he was very wealthy; again it was said that he bore a commission in the navy. However, though none could correctly define his position, all agreed that he was one of the most gentlemanly and most elegant men they had ever known—full of wit and gaiety, and capable of rendering himself agreeable to all with whom he came in contact. Consequently he was a constant visitor at all the gay parties given in the neighborhood, and languishing glances were cast upon him by more than one fair damsel. He danced, and flirted and talked with all, but

greatly to the annoyance of his fair friends, Jane Miller, the humblest of all the belles he met in this gay society, seemed to be his favorite. It is true that some ill-natured reports got abroad that were prejudicial to the character of Seymour. It was said that he had played the gay deceiver with many a trusting heart; but these reports did not injure him in the estimation of his fair admirers; indeed they seemed to like him better in consequence, and to dare him to the encounter with their own charms;—besides, was he not the confidential friend of Mr. Mordant? and was not that a proof of his respectability and integrity?

Several times he had called at the residence of the widow Miller in New Jersey, for the express purpose of seeing Jane, and taking her out for a ride with him—and both the mother and the daughter were proud of the favor he had shown them.

Thus matters were progressing until about three weeks before the period at which we first introduced Captain Seymour to the reader. His visits to Jane became more and more frequent, and it was thought that something more than mere friendship was intended by these visits. At this period, however, Jane Miller received an anonymous letter written in a female hand, which read as follows:

“Lady, beware of the man who calls himself Captain Seymour: he has deceived me and others; he will deceive you. If you think he wishes to make you his wife, I tell you he cannot and dare not. Do not disregard this warning, and you may hear from me again.

“One whose hopes George Seymour has blighted.”

Jane Miller was greatly distressed upon the receipt of this letter, for words stronger than those of mere friendship had passed between her and Seymour.

She resolved, after much thought and a severe mental struggle, to show Seymour the letter. She would not allow her lover's fair fame to be injured and her own hopes blasted by an anonymous and probably a false and malicious letter, and on their next meeting she accepted his invitation to walk with him as usual, and after some conversation, told him of the letter she had received, and showed it to him.

He laughed at it. A mean device of some of my fair, jealous friends, your rivals for my good graces Jane,” said he. “Heed them not; I like you better than they, and that is the cause of their malice.”

Jane believed him, for her heart inclined her to listen to the

denial of the charges preferred against him, therefore, very little protestation on his part satisfied her ; (but had she been less infatuated, she could but have noted the hollow, tremulous tone of voice in which he spoke. Had she gazed upon his features with an earnest gaze of scrutiny, at that moment she would have noticed the quiver of the muscles of his face and the pallor of his complexion ; but all was over in a moment, and his countenance resumed its composure, his voice its assured and measured tone.)

A few days after this, however, Mrs. Miller received a similar letter to that which had been received by her daughter, and shortly afterwards Jane received a third letter written in the same handwriting. The mother's fears were aroused, and she forbade her daughter to see Seymour, and for three days Jane complied with her mother's request. She herself had become alarmed, and she refused the captain's visits. Still her heart refused to cast him off, without further proof than that which a mere letter, the writer of which was unknown, could afford.

She listened again to his importunities, and promised, unknown to her mother, who was absent on a visit of a few days' duration at her New England home, to walk out with him and listen to his explanations.

When, a few days after, the widow returned home, her daughter was not to be found. The widow was in an agony of distress. Captain Seymour was interrogated, and he confessed to have walked out with her on the Jersey shore of the river, a few days before, and to have escorted her back to her home, and left her at the door of her mother's house.

The other occupants of the house did not recollect seeing her after she left the house with Capt. Seymour, but felt no alarm, as they supposed she had gone on a visit to her friends in the city.

Seymour appeared as much grieved and shocked as the rest of the friends who had known her. Every search was made in vain ; but it was discovered by the widow that her daughter's jewelry had been removed, as well as a considerable portion of her clothing ; and, as she believed, by her daughter's hand, from the particular articles that had been taken, and the care and caution with which the selection had been made.

The Albatross sailed about a week after this ; but, during that week, Captain Seymour called frequently upon the widow, and always expressed great anxiety and distress respecting Jane. Captain Seymour had been gone from the port about a

week, when the neighborhood of Mrs. Miller's residence was alarmed by a report that the body of a young woman, which had apparently been two or three weeks in the water, and the features of which were so much decomposed as to prevent the possibility of recognition, had been picked up by some boatmen, floating near the banks of the river. Some persons who had seen the body, said that the clothing (what remained of it, for it had been much torn) resembled that usually worn by Jane Miller, and the unhappy widow went to see the body. She thought she recognized the clothing, and also a ring on the third finger of the right hand, that had been placed there by Captain Seymour in the mother's presence, at the time when she thought the Captain's intentions to her daughter were dictated by feelings of honor, and when she had, therefore, rather encouraged his addresses, little dreaming that she would have been so soon called on to mourn over so melancholy a termination of that daughter's earthly career. But who was the murderer? Did her poor child die by violence or by suicide? These were the fearful questions that alternately presented themselves to the widow's mind. Perhaps she had, by forbidding her daughter any further intercourse with Captain Seymour, been the cause of the rash act which now placed that daughter's form in its present shape, before her? Again, it might be that the author of the mysterious letters which she and her daughter had received, was in some way connected with the murder; or perhaps, Captain Seymour was really the bad man her anonymous correspondent described him to be. Each of these propositions had some weight, but none of them were sufficiently proved to settle the question in her mind.

A coroner's jury was summoned, and an inquest was held, and after such evidence as could be brought forward was heard, the jury returned a verdict to the effect that "the deceased came to her death by drowning accidentally or otherwise," and that was all that was known of the matter. Mrs. Miller had the body decently interred. Some time after, a gentleman residing in the neighborhood, with whom the widow was partially acquainted, informed her that he had met her daughter walking out with the captain, about the period of her disappearance, and that both appeared to be highly excited. The captain was vehemently expostulating, and the young lady was weeping. He said they were on the banks of the river when he met them, near the spot where the body was found. He hinted his suspicions of Seymour; but the widow, almost heart-

broken, disregarded them. She, too, had her suspicions, and she had spoken to Mr. Mordant about Seymour ; but the merchant had given the captain so high a character, that she scarcely knew what to think. She had noticed the state of excitement he had appeared to be in when he called upon her, after her daughter's disappearance ; but this might either be the excitement of guilt or that of natural feeling and anxiety. She, therefore, kept her suspicions within her own breast. Mrs. Miller wore the ring as a memento of her lost child and her sad fate. She could not take any measures calculated to clear up the mystery surrounding her daughter's disappearance, except such as she felt would rake up sad remembrances she would sooner let slumber.

CHAPTER III.

The Albatross sails from New York, and the secret object of her voyage becomes known.

SOME days had elapsed since the departure of the Albatross. The vessel, notwithstanding she had a very light cargo on board, had been so hampered, at the moment of sailing, with goods that had been brought down in a hurry, and were as hurriedly taken on board, that it had occupied all this interval to stow things away in their places, and make everything shipshape. As long as this necessary work was going on, Captain Seymour had displayed great energy, superintending the arrangement of everything himself, and scarcely seeming to need rest. Fortunately, the weather was fair, and the work was effected with greater rapidity than it would otherwise have been, and at the expiration of the period alluded to above, the Albatross wore an entirely different aspect ; she had proceeded to sea more lumbered up than is usual with even vessels employed in carrying emigrants or troops ; in fact, many persons wondered for what cause her departure had been so hurried ; now she presented the neat and trim appearance of a pleasure yacht, or of a ship of war. The utmost cleanliness was observable everywhere, above and below, and her decks were " holy stoned " to an almost chalky whiteness. Every visible piece of metal was polished until it shone like burnished gold and silver, and wherever the paint on her sides or bulwarks had been chafed or

smeared, in the hurry and bustle of preparing for sea, the spot was carefully retouched, until not a speck was to be found to mar the exquisite finish of the beautiful craft, within or without. All this labor, however, had been so systematically effected, so apportioned out to the crew, which was, as we have noticed, exceedingly numerous, that, although all were busy, the work did not fall with excessive severity upon any one, unless it were on the captain himself. The man-o'-war regulation of "watch and watch" was strictly observed, and every officer and seaman had his share of needful rest.

Up to this period the sailors had had little time or opportunity to become acquainted with each other, or to indulge in speculations relative to the voyage, as is generally customary; still it was very evident that some eight or ten amongst them knew more than the others, and they kept their council to themselves. The crew had been divided into "messes," and to each "mess" two or more of the knowing ones had been appointed, not for the purpose, *as it appeared*, of exercising any authority over the others, still not without some obvious cause for the arrangement on the part of the commander.

Another regulation, seldom, however, to be met with except in national vessels, but which was observed on board the Albatross, was the complete seclusion of the captain from his officers. It is generally customary, however private the captain's cabin may be at other times, for the first and second mates to take their meals there, in company with the captain himself; not so on board the Albatross. The crew were divided into three "watches," under the command, severally, of the first, second, and third mates, and these officers "messed" together, in a small cabin partitioned off from the after part of the steerage deck on the starboard side; while a similar cabin on the larboard side, immediately opposite, was appropriated to the boatswain, carpenter, sail-maker, armorer, and gunner—none of whom were expected to keep watch at night, but who were all required to be on duty the whole of the day—although the duties of the two latter officers seemed merely nominal, and were the source of much speculation and not a little merriment to many of the crew.

It is necessary that we now endeavor to describe the appearance of the mates, upon whom, now that the ship was made "tight and trim," appeared to be devolved by the captain, her sole management.

The first mate was a tall, sinewy-built, athletic Yankee—a

fair specimen, if one might form a judgment from his appearance — of the nautical produce, in human form, of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. His age might have been fifty, for his dark hair was slightly grizzled, as were also the bushy dark whiskers, slightly tinged with red, which met beneath his chin and almost concealed his sinewy throat. His face was furrowed with deep marks, and the skin was tanned to a fiery bronze color, which effectually resisted, now, any further action of the elements, and the large collar of his coat was usually turned down over his broad shoulders, exposing his brawny chest. His mouth had acquired a permanent upward twist, in consequence of his habit of constantly keeping a huge plug of tobacco in his left cheek, and from the opposite, downward corner of his mouth, a canal, through which the surplus tobacco juice constantly flowed on to his chin, had been created by the same habit. The expression of his face, though indicative of recklessness, had not, perhaps, originally been unpleasant ; but constant exposure from boyhood, to freezing winds and scorching heats, and the presence of a suspicious cicatrized wound extending from his brow across his cheek bone to the lower part of the face in front of the left ear, gave him a stern, sinister aspect, that was not calculated to impress the beholder favorably. The name of this worthy was Abijah Tolcroft, and he was as rough and ungainly in his actions and conversation as he was in appearance, although generally tolerably good-tempered after his own fashion ; but there was one peculiarity in Abijah—he could not endure to be questioned with regard to the scar upon his face, and the unlucky querist who alluded to it in his presence, was sure to arouse his ire, although sometimes, he would say to himself, casually, as though in excuse for its ugliness, that it had been occasioned by his falling forward upon the gunwale of a whale-boat, when he was a mere boy. So much for Abijah Tolcroft, who, from his position, necessarily was a prominent personage on board of the Albatross. The subordinate officers we shall describe more briefly ; the second mate, Edward Allan, was a short, stout young man of about twenty-eight years of age ; he possessed a very dark complexion, with regular and handsome features, was lively in disposition and usually good tempered ; but liable to sudden gusts of uncontrollable passion. He hailed from Virginia, but his accent was that of a foreigner, and when carried away by passion, he was wont to indulge in terrific Spanish oaths. Many persons suspected, although they dared not hint it to him, that he

was a Spanish Creole—and that, like a good many sailors, he went by an adopted name. Both the above described officers had sailed several voyages with captain Seymour—but the third mate, François Perrin, a native of Louisiana, born of French parents, and more of a Frenchman than an American in manners and appearance, had been shipped in New York.

François was quite a young man, apparently not more than twenty-five years of age ; but of immense stature, possessed of great personal strength, and morose and surly in his disposition. Such as we have described were the officers of the Albatross.

The captain's quarters were more retired, and consisted of two small cabins, one of which, the private cabin, was quite in the stern of the ship. It was a small, very small place, but rendered light and airy by the two stern windows and the large sky-light above ; although a mere closet, it was compact and perfect in every point, and furnished after a fashion that would have done credit to the most refined taste ever shown in the arrangement of a lady's boudoir. A sofa of carved rose-wood, with crimson velvet cushions and pillows, ran the whole breadth of the stern, and formed a luxurious lounge wherefrom to witness the white foam that the vessel left behind as she cut her way swiftly through the yielding water, or, when crossing the tropics to inhale the cool breeze and gaze down into the deep, where disported the many-hued dolphin or the beautifully formed bonito, or to watch the hungry yet timid and cautious shark, as surrounded by its parasites in the shape of pilot fish, it now advanced towards the treacherous bait and smelt it—even touching with its shovel-like snout the seemingly dainty morsel, and then turned as if seized with sudden fright, and swam rapidly away, again and again to return, each time grown more bold, until at last the fatal grip is made ; for a moment the white belly of the huge monster, as it turns upward to seize its prey, flashes like a phosphorescent gleam beneath the blue water, and then a hurried flight with the line, and a desperate thrashing of the water with the monster's tail, tells that the terror of the ocean is captured by his inveterate foe, the sailor. The rudder pipe was veneered with the finest mahogany, with gilded satin-wood panels—and behind it, between the two stern windows, was a book-case reaching from the sofa to the ceiling of the cabin, well stored with handsomely bound volumes, chiefly consisting of poetry and works of imagination of the very highest order, although the lower

shelf was devoted to books of science and navigation and commerce, and other subjects connected with the profession of the mariner.

In the centre of the cabin, firmly lashed to the floor, was a handsome centre table of highly polished, solid mahogany, and on each side of the cabin were two recesses adapted for sleeping places, which were hidden from view by crimson silk, and muslin curtains tastefully disposed; curtains of similar hue and material also shaded the cabin windows. The main portion of the front of the cabin was occupied by a large mirror, with a gorgeously covered and gilded frame, and in the vacant places round about, hung small but exquisitely finished paintings, while from the ceiling, immediately over the centre table, was suspended a handsome gilded chandelier, with ground glass globes.

The deck was covered with oil cloth neatly painted, and over the starboard bed cabin, which was appropriated by Captain Seymour to his own use, hung a pair of richly mounted pistols, and a sabre, carved after the fashion of a Turkish scimitar, encased in a crimson velvet scabbard surmounted with gold, of which metal the hilt appeared to be formed. The pistols and sabre, indeed, were the only articles to be seen which would have led the casual observer to disincline to the belief that the cabin had been purposely fitted up for the accommodation of a lady of taste and fashion. From this beautiful little apartment doors on each side of the mirror led into the fore-cabin used by the captain as a dining cabin and for general purposes. Here the furniture, though good, was of commoner material, and more appropriate to the generally conceived idea of a merchant ship's cabin. The desk was covered with oil cloth, as in the after cabin; but the only light came from the sky-light above, beneath which depended, directly over the dining table, a thermometer and barometer. Muskets were placed in racks along the wainscot on either side, and some half dozen ottomans, in lieu of chairs, were ranged around the cabin; and, in a bracket over the companion way, was suspended a large ship's spy glass. There was no other furniture in this cabin, except a small mahogany stand screwed down in one of the aft corners, on which was firmly secured the captain's chronometer. From the fore-cabin the deck was reached from a winding stair-case, forming a semi-circle, around which was the steward's pantry—with a sleeping place for that functionary beneath.

There was, as there are in all merchant vessels, a forecastle cabin on deck, filled with bunks and appropriated to the use of the sailors—but after the vessel had been thoroughly set to rights, to the astonishment of the uninitiated seamen, these bunks were filled up with the immediately required stores of the boatswain, sailmaker and carpenter, and the men were ordered to swing their hammocks between decks, man-of-war fashion—and to bring them up every morning, at the sound of the boatswain's whistle, and stow them in the hammock nettings, the "watch below," during the hours of daylight, snoozing on their pea jackets, on the lower deck, or amusing themselves by mending their clothing, and such other employments as generally engage Jack, when at sea.

Henry Davis had suffered severely from sea sickness during the first few days after the vessel had left the port, and he had been treated very leniently by the captain, or rather had been left pretty much to himself—Captain Seymour's time having been, as we have said, fully occupied. He had been indulged with the use of the larboard sleeping berth in the after cabin—where rest for a few days until he had become accustomed to the motion of the vessel, restored him to his general health. It was understood that he was then to occupy the post of steward, which, during his temporary sickness was filled by a lad named Frank Martin, who had been several voyages in others of Mr. Mordant's ships, although this was his first trip in the Albatross. Frank was kind and considerate to his young shipmate, notwithstanding he was compelled to fulfil his duties for him, for he had hitherto been employed wholly as a cabin boy, and his ambition now prompted him to go forward and rough it out with the foremast men, and to learn the duties of a sailor.

At length Henry recovered so far as, by the advice of the captain, to go on deck and take an airing—

"And go with him, Frank," added the captain, addressing the other lad—"have a chat with him and tell him the name of the ropes and sails; it will cheer the poor fellow's spirits up a little, I am going to read awhile in the after cabin—and will ring the bell if I want your services."

The two lads went on deck together, and after strolling up and down the quarter deck for a few minutes, seated themselves upon the taffrail, and entered into conversation.

"Have you ever sailed with Captain Seymour before," asked Henry, or Harry, as he was now called.

"No: I have been six voyages to sea in others of Mr. Mordant's ships, but this is my first trip in the Albatross."

"Are they all as handsome ships as this?" continued Harry. Frank laughed—

"No, indeed they ain't," he answered. "For my part, I don't understand this ship at all—and I don't understand Captain Seymour either. I once went on board a man-of-war, when on a voyage up the Mediterranean, and they had just such rules and regulations aboard as they have here; and, another thing, I can tell you, one half the men don't seem to know what to make of the appearance of things. I have heard them talking matters over—and I believe they would ask an explanation of the captain or the officers, if it wasn't for fear of the others—those rough looking, bearded fellows that the captain has placed in every one of the new fangled "messes" as they are called. These chaps hang together, and I believe, though they don't say so, that the other men are frightened of them."

"Captain Seymour seems to be quite a gentleman," observed Harry.

"A good deal too much of a gentleman for me to understand him," resumed his companion; "I will tell you something strange. Do you know that since the third day after leaving port we have been steering to the eastward instead of the regular course of California ships?"

"Perhaps the captain and officers have their own reasons for so doing," replied Harry.

"Perhaps they have; reasons that no one else can fathom, for we are sailing close to the wind, when a more southerly course would give us a leading breeze; but as to the captain, I suppose he gives the mates orders how to steer; but I never before saw a captain take so little heed of what was going on. He's more like a passenger on board than anything else; and then, since we have got into 'blue water,' he togs himself off in a navy undress and wears a cap with a gold band. Seems to me that either I've got into an enchanted ship, or else into a man-o'-war in disguise. I can't understand it."

The bell in the captain's cabin rang, and Frank descended to learn what the captain wanted.

"Is Harry on deck still, Frank?" asked the captain.

"Yes sir," replied the lad.

"Send him down; tell him I want to speak to him, and come with him yourself."

"Ay-ay, sir," responded Frank, as he left the cabin and rejoined his companion.

"Captain Seymour wants you, Harry," said he, "you are to go down with me into the cabin."

Harry rose from his seat and prepared to follow his young shipmate ; his cheeks flushed, and a slight tremor pervaded his limbs—the boy was naturally timid, and perhaps he feared that the captain, although hitherto considerate towards him, was about to find fault with him for the idle life he had led since he had come on board, while every one else had been so busily employed—he followed Frank to the cabin.

The captain was reclining upon a sofa reading ; he laid aside the book as the boys entered, and thus addressed Harry—

“ Have you quite recovered from your sea sickness, boy ? ”

“ Yes, sir, I hope I have,” answered the lad.

“ And you will be able to do the light duties that will in future be required of you in the cabin ? ”

“ I hope so, sir. I will try my best.”

“ Well, no one can do more. All I ask is that every one on board this ship shall obey my orders implicitly and without a murmur ; then you will find me a kind and considerate master—otherwise, let them look out for themselves. They had better wish themselves in h—l than on board the *Albatross*.”

A stern expression, such as neither of the lads had seen before, came over the handsome features of the captain, as he gave vent to this last expression—but it immediately vanished. It made apparently but little impression upon Frank, but Harry trembled to such a degree that he was scarcely able to reply that he hoped he should be able to please him.

“ Don't be frightened boy,” said the captain, smiling. “ I have no doubt you and I shall agree very well together. Consider yourself from this moment installed into the duties of my steward. You, Frank, Mr. Mordant informed me, are anxious to learn a seaman's duties, so I suppose you will be glad to relinquish your post to your successor. Well, you are in the right, boy—I will tell Mr. Tolcroft to appoint you to one of the messes, and I hope I shall hear a good account of you. You can both go now”—and taking up his book again, the captain was soon apparently deeply absorbed in its contents.

“ Captain Seymour has more spirit than I gave him credit for, in spite of his dandy dress and his white hands,” whispered Frank to his companion.

“ The expression of his face was terrible,” answered Harry—still trembling. “ I never could have believed such a change could have come over any one's features in a moment, least of all—so handsome a face as that of Captain Seymour—

I am half sorry I shipped with him," and a deep but expressive sigh escaped from the breast of the boy as he spoke.

Frank laughed—"You will soon find out that a handsome face often conceals a d—l's heart," he replied. "You are like a young bear, all your sorrows have yet to come."

We have never been able to understand to what particular sorrows a bear is subjected, beyond those natural to all quadrupeds, or bipeds, too, for that matter; but it has been, for time immemorial, a common expression amongst seamen; is, by them, we presume, considered as remarkably witty, and therefore Frank is held excusable in our opinion for delivering himself of it.

Harry Davis took charge of the steward's pantry, and Frank Martin went on deck again to commence his new duties.

While this conversation had been going on in the cabin and on the quarter deck—a group of seamen, tempted by the fineness of the evening, instead of returning to their hammocks, when the "watch" was "piped below" had seated themselves in the head of the vessel, and were amusing themselves with their pipes and cozy chat.

"Tell ye what it is, Bill," said one, as after knocking the ashes out of his pipe, he had temporarily laid it aside. "Tell ye what it is—there ain't none o' them black a vized chaps within ear hail, be there?"—added the man, stopping suddenly, and looking cautiously around him.

"No—by luck's chance there ain't, Dick—what then?"

"Have ye got any bacca?"

"Yes."

"Then give us a chaw—and, shipmates, I'll tell ye a bit of my mind."

The quid was supplied, and Dick forthwith deposited it in his cheek, and giving it two or three rolls over with his tongue, so as to draw out the flavor—thus proceeded.

"Shipmates, there's somethin' or other as I can't understand as regards the regulations o' this here craft; blowed if it don't conflicate me entirely. I've sailed in many a craft in my days. I've sailed aboard 'Uncle Sam,' and I've sailed in merchantmen of every sort; but I never seed sich rummy moves as goes on board this here hooker; d—me if she ain't like a craft as has been metamorfussed—she's got man-o'-war rules without man-o'-war guns. Then there's the skipper saunterin' about, dressed as fine as a leeftenant, afore he's got used to the swabs upon his shoulders, or a post-captain for the

matter of that, while the first mate's as rough and ready a chap as ye'd find aboard a Nantucket whaler; t'other mates they never hardly speaks to the crew, except it be them black avized chaps, they're stuck into every mess—and they seems jist as distant with the captain. Now, shipmates, I've got something else to say, I don't pretend to be anything of a schollard, seeing as how I never had more nor a quarter's schoolin' in my life; but a fellow as has been upon the salt water, man and boy, a matter of twenty years or more, doesn't want much book-larnin' to know as a East South East course ain't the nearest way to steer to reach the 'Quator, and a barky must cross the 'Quator, at least, about amidships between the African and American shores to get to Californy. It's my opinion as the skipper ain't bound to Californy at all. Then, shipmates, who on 'arth ever see a crew of well on to thirty hands, besides officers, in a small vessel such as this craft is? b'lieve me, all ain't right aboard, and its our dooty to know where we are going to, and what sort of a craft we've got aboard of," then lowering his voice to a whisper, Dick added, "shipmates, its my private opinion as this 'ere blessed craft is either a slaver or somethin' worse."

"But she ain't got no guns aboard," replied one of the listeners.

"Not so far as we knows," replied Dick, "but who among us knows what is aboard and what ain't; she's got an armorer and a gunner—at any rate,—and I guess guns 'll be found when they are wanted."

"The skipper don't look much like a slaver captain," observed one of the group—"He's too soft spoken, and too dandified."

"If you'd had the trick at the helm, night afore last, Tom," replied Dick, "you wouldn't ha' said that. He and the first mate were a talking earnestly together, and the mate, he said somethin' that the skipper didn't seem to like, and blow me, if I don't think it was relating to the crew—however, whatever it was, the skipper looked as savage as ever I seed a man look in my life, and he turned on his heel, and says he:

"'We'll see when the proper time comes, Mr. Tolcroft; I never found the man yet who dare oppose my will,' and away he walked, puffing the smoke from his cigar like a high pressure *engine*, as he strode half a dozen times up and down the quarter deck, and then he dived into the cabin, and I seed no more on him during that watch."

"What had best be done, shipmates?" asked one of the group, after they had sat silent for some moments.

"Why," answered Dick, who appeared to have taken upon himself the office of spokesman for the party; "what I recommends is this; there's on'y ten of them black-a-vised chaps—and there's twenty of us—I b'lieve them to be in the skipper's and mate's secret and we ain't; they may look fiercer with their mustachers and black whiskers and beards; but they ain't no stronger nor no braver men than we be. I proposes, as we makes up our minds to send a 'round robin' to the skipper, respectfully axin' to know what sort of a v'yage we've shipped for. If he tells us, so, well; if not, we must think o' somethin' else—but I goes dead ag'in sailing in the dark."

One of the men alluded to under the name of "black-a-vised chaps" now carelessly joined the group, and the party shortly broke up and went below to their hammocks.

A fortnight passed, and it appeared that nothing had been determined upon by the malcontents, since no "round robin" had been sent to the captain. A greater distance than ever appeared to be observed by one portion of the crew with regard to the other, and the symptoms of discontent were noticed by the captain and the mates, but no movement towards an explanation was made.

During this period, the wind had come round farther to the westward; the ship's yards had been squared, and she had made extraordinary progress towards her destination, wherever that might be. The wind had increased to a gale but the ship sped gallantly on before it, and made excellent weather, bounding over the billows like a duck, without throwing a drop of spray on her decks. The captain, whose listless habits had attracted the notice of the crew, now appeared oftener upon deck, and sometimes, especially towards nightfall, he carefully scanned the horizon with his spy-glass. Once or twice he remained on deck throughout the whole night, merely taking an occasional nap on the hen-coop, wrapped up in his boat cloak. One of the crew always chosen—although as if by a mere chance order—from the ten men already alluded to, was constantly stationed at the topmast head, on the look-out, and one morning the well known but always startling cry of "sail ho!" was heard.

The captain, who had gone down into the cabin to breakfast, was on deck, spy-glass in hand, in a moment.

"Where away?" he shouted to the look-out.

"On the weather bow, sir?" was the reply.

"What does she look like?"

"I can't make out yet. I can but just see her topsails—the canvas looks white and square. She may be a cruiser."

"Mr. Tolcroft," said the captain, "we are out of the range of any regular traders; that vessel must either be the craft I am looking out for, or one of the infernal British cruisers. Any way, we had better get the weather gage of her. Brace for'ard the yards, men," he shouted to the crew, for the first time since the vessel had sailed from New York, taking the direction of the vessel into his own hands.

The yards were promptly braced almost sharp up, the vessel careened over to the pressure of the wind, now brought abeam, and the captain again shouted to the look-out aloft—"How does the strange sail bear now?"

"On the lee beam," replied the man.

"Can you see anything more of her?"

"No, sir; her topsails only are yet in sight."

"Mr. Tolcroft," said the captain, "we will keep her on this course for a couple of hours until we have worked well to windward, before we approach her any nearer. We can then do as we please, after obtaining a closer view." Then again addressing the look-out, he shouted, "let me know if the strange sail alters her course, and also as soon as you can distinguish her courses. Mr. Tolcroft," he added, "it would be as well now to get up the guns; not however, that they will be needed, because, if the stranger should turn out to be a cruiser, I mean to show her our heels, and I should like to see one of the vermin that could touch the Albatross in a breeze like this, and if she proves to be the vessel I expect, why her captain and I will shake flippers together instead of fighting."

"Would it not be better, Captain Seymour, to speak to the men now, afore I gives the order? The time must come. Seems to me there's no time like the present," was the mate's reply.

"Ah, well thought of, Mr. Tolcroft. Call Allan and Francois aft, and then direct the boatswain to pipe all hands."

Thus saying, the captain descended to his cabin and armed himself with the pistols described as hanging above his sleeping berth. Carefully concealing the weapons in his bosom, he re-ascended just as the men, some of them still half asleep, were emerging from the hatchways. Allan and Francois were standing conversing with the first mate.

"By gar!" said the latter, in reply to some remark of the

first mate's, just as the captain approached, and loud enough for him to hear—"By gar! I would make short vork of it; they should not dare to say dere soul vas dere own. Join us or walk de plank—"

"Silence, Francois," interrupted the captain, in an authoritative tone. "Allan once got me into a scrape through such brutality as you seem inclined to. Moral suasion is the thing. There are few cases in which a spoonful of oil will not go further than a quart of vinegar."

By this time the men were assembled, wondering, the greater part of them, for what purpose they had been summoned, yet partly guessing the cause.

"My lads," said the captain, stepping forward, "I wish to know from your own lips, whether or not you have found yourselves well treated since you have been under my command?"

"Ay, ay, sir," was the universal reply. None of the men could have responded otherwise to this question.

"Well then," continued the captain, "I shall say but a few words in explanation. I dare say many of you, believing that you had shipped on board a merchant vessel bound to California, have wondered not only at the regulations of my ship, but also at the course I have thought proper to steer. I am glad, however, to find that none amongst you have thought it necessary to remonstrate. Had such been the case, it might have led to something *unpleasant* (laying a stress on the word). I am not in the habit of having my slightest word disobeyed, nor even disputed. My lads, we are bound not to California, but to the coast of Africa—not after gold, but after what will put gold into our pockets, faster than it can be found by the luckiest adventurer in California. The Albatross is bound to the Coast for the slaves, which we shall dispose of in Havana or in the Brazils. There are some amongst you who have all along known this. I have not thought it necessary to inform the others until now. I wished first to see what you were made of. As seamen, I acknowledge I am proud of you. Your conduct hitherto proves to me that I can trust you. I am expecting hereabouts to meet with a consort, who will give me perhaps, some valuable information respecting the state of affairs upon the Coast at present. There is a vessel now in sight which may be the one of which I am in search, or it may be a Britisher. I do not intend to approach much nearer till I am satisfied which it be. Mr. Tolcroft is now about to rouse up the guns which have hitherto been concealed in the lower hold. I have heard some

of you joking at the idea of my having a gunner and armorer on board. Well, lads, I have no objections now and then to a harmless joke ; but you will see that henceforward the gunner and armorer will find employment for themselves.

"Now, men, give one cheer to show that you are all satisfied, and then to work with a will, and bowse up the guns from below."

The men, not in the secret, had listened with amazement ; but the confident manner and tone of the captain had pleased them, and certain remarks he had made had shown them, intuitively, that he was not a man to be trifled with. We have observed in a preceding chapter, that the seamen had all been picked out by the captain, on account of their appearance, and his belief that they were such as would suit his purpose, though he had confided his secret but to a few, chosen on account of the especial truculency of their appearance, and the recommendation of the shipping master, who knew them. The novelty of the idea pleased the rest—sailors like novelty ; besides they saw at a glance they could not help themselves, and visions of gain floated before their eyes in the distance. One loud, unanimous shout was the response.

"We will stick to you, captain, to the last," and under the direction of the mates, they proceeded to put the vessel into warlike trim.

Harry Davis had heard the speech. He was standing by Frank, who whispered—

"I guessed this from the first. I don't care ; but what would my mother say, if she knew I was on board a slaver."

"Good God !" was the reply of Harry. "Is it possible ! Captain Seymour the commander of a slave ship. Can Mr. Mordant be aware of this ?"

"Francois," said Captain Seymour, as, his harangue concluded, he left the mates and crew to the execution of the orders he had given, and returned to the use of his spy-glass, as if he felt satisfied that he had done and said enough. "Francois, let this be a lesson to you. I see you are inclined to be impetuous ; in nine cases out of ten, impetuosity is not only needless, but positively injurious. Men are to be governed by firmness and suavity mingled. When, as I grant sometimes you may, you meet with doltheads too stupid to listen to reason and unable to understand moral suasion, then hit right and left ; kill and slay without compunction ; but such things should be avoided if possible. Just take a look through your glass,

Mr. Allan," added he, addressing the second mate. "I fancy I can discover the strange ship's top-g'ant sails."

The second mate did as he was requested, and leaving Captain Seymour and his crew keeping a sharp lookout after the stranger, we will close the present chapter, and beg the reader to return with us to the residence of the owner of the Albatross in New York city.

CHAPTER IV.

Showing how the slave trade is maintained, and exposing the heartlessness engendered by fashion.

ON the very day week after the Albatross had sailed on her voyage, Mr. Mordant on returning home from his office in the lower part of the city, had taken his dinner as usual with his family, and then, something contrary to his usual custom, had left the ladies in the parlor, and retired to his study, taking with him a roll of documents, which he sat himself down to read carefully. There did not appear, however, to be anything disagreeable in the nature of these documents ; for Mr. Mordant, on entering his study, before he sat down, had lit the globe lamp that stood upon the centre table ; then unlocked the door of a small buffet beneath a bookcase, and taking therefrom a decanter of Port and a wine-glass (Mr. Mordant was a lover of Port wine, and always indulged himself with a few glasses during the evening), he placed it on the table, with a wine glass, then took off his coat, and taking a voluminous dressing-gown from a peg, he hung up the coat, and wrapped the gown around him : this done, he poured out a glass of wine, drank it off, smacked his lips, and with a smile upon his rather handsome, benevolent looking face, he touched the bell pull, and finally threw himself lazily down into the chair.

A negro servant answered the summons.

"Ned," said the merchant, "bring up my slippers, and the coalscuttle."

"Yes, sir," replied the man, and leaving the room, he returned in a few minutes with the articles his master had called for.

"Put some coals on the fire, Ned ; and, Ned, I expect a

gentleman to call upon me this evening. When he comes, show him up stairs."

"Yes, sir," again replied the servant, and Mr. Mordant was left to the perusal of his papers and the enjoyment of his wine. He took things very leisurely; taking in one hand his gold double eye-glass, he separated the glasses by touching the spring, and applying them to his optics, slowly perused paper after paper.

An exclamation of satisfaction, something between a sigh and a grunt, proceeded from his lips as he laid aside the last of the documents, and then, after drinking a second glass of wine, he muttered to himself as he sat turning the glasses in his fingers, and gazing at the flickering flames in the cannel coal fire.

"Altogether a very well managed piece of business—very—good—indeed (these last words were uttered slowly). I shall make a capital thing of it, if Seymour only is as lucky this trip as he was on the last. He may lose the Albatross during her next voyage in that case. One voyage has cleared her cost and all the expenses, not only of that, but of the present one. Cautious, and a devilish clever fellow is Seymour, and such a gentlemanly dog withal; brave as a lion, too; perhaps a little—just a *leetle* wild, but merely the hot blood of youth; it must sow its wild oats. I wonder what keeps Grindley; it's past the hour on which he promised to call."

There was a ring at the bell at the hall door, and in a few moments the sound of footsteps was heard ascending the stairs, and there was a rap at the door of the study.

"Come in," said the merchant—the negro servant entered and announced "Mr. Douglass."

Mr. Mordant never swore in the full acceptation of the term—never even made use of an ill-sounding word excepting when by himself, and then only when unusually elated or depressed; but a naughty word almost escaped from his lips when the announcement was made by the servant man. (He was almost excusable under the circumstances—he had been on the tether hooks of expectation, awaiting the arrival of Mr. Grindley, and Mr. Douglass was unexpectedly announced.) However, by a strong effort he suppressed the wicked exclamation, and welcomed his visitor with a smile.

"I am happy to see you, Mr. Douglass," said he, rising from his seat, and taking his unlooked-for visitor by the hand. "Pray be seated. Ned"—turning to the servant—"place a

wine glass on the table for Mr. Douglass. Take a glass of wine, Mr. Douglass—such port as you don't often find, sir—my own importation, vintage 1814.

Mr. Douglass poured out a glass of wine and drank it, and took the proffered chair. "I have called, knowing your benevolence, Mr. Mordant," said he, "on an errand of charity. Some friends of mine, and yours too, who take a great interest in African emancipation, are stirring themselves to raise a fund to enable a free negro in this city to purchase his wife and children from their owner in Louisiana. The price demanded is \$1,100, and we have already raised \$700. What sum shall I put down opposite your name, Mr. Mordant?"

"You may put me down for fifty dollars, Mr. Douglass. I am always glad to give my mite in the cause of charity."

"Very handsome, indeed, Mr. Mordant—very handsome; besides, sir, it is not only your donation, liberal as it is, which pleases me; but I consider the example set to other wealthy men. Your subscription will bring others, and amongst us, we shall have the pleasure of serving our fellow creatures, the poor benighted children of Africa."

"I am thankful that I am in a situation to render such assistance," replied the merchant, who was evidently impatient for his visitor to take his departure. Perhaps Mr. Douglass noticed this, for after sitting a few moments, he said—

"I see you are engaged, Mr. Mordant. I will not longer intrude upon your time. I am confident that a gentleman so extensively engaged in business as you are, must have all his time fully employed."

"I am rather busy to-night, Mr. Douglass," said Mr. Mordant, glancing at the papers on the table; "but I shall be happy to see you at any time. Drop in, in a friendly manner, whenever you may chance to be passing this way." Then shaking his visitor by the hand, he bade him "good-night," and Mr. Douglass left the room, and was shown out by the servant man. "A very obtrusive man, that Douglass," muttered the merchant after he had heard the servant close the street door. "There are fifty dollars thrown away. Not that I care for the money, thank heaven! I can afford that; and after all, these things do no harm; they help people on in the world, and raise them wonderfully in the estimation of their friends, and then when one comes to think of it, there is charity, real charity, in such donations as these. Here is a poor man whose family are separated from him, and held in

slavery—a few wealthy persons interest themselves, and his wife and children are set at liberty, and he is rendered happy. Now (again glancing at the papers on the table) here the case is altogether different. They *will* purchase slaves in Cuba and in the Brazils, and somebody or other *will* bring them from Africa to sell. I fit out a ship for this purpose ; take care that everything on board is adapted for the comfort of the poor wretches on the voyage—and I dispose of them at a great profit to myself, and to all who are engaged in the undertaking with me. Very probably I am sowing the seeds of their adoption, or at least the adoption of their offspring into the Christian Church, and fitting them for future emancipation. At all events, Seymour assures me they are slaves to greater tyrants in their own country than they are in Cuba or anywhere else—and, therefore, under any circumstances, I am doing them a service. Then, it may be said, I am evading the laws of my country. So does everybody who fetches a piece of silk or a bundle of lace over the water. Such offences are merely venial. The guilt only lies in their discovery, and that I have taken every precaution against.”

Mr. Mordant was interrupted in his speciously argumentative soliloquy by a second ring at the door-bell, and in a few seconds more Mr. Grindley was shown into the study.

“Good evening, Mr. Grindley,” said the merchant, rising from his seat, and cordially shaking the hand of his visitor. “I have been expecting you for some time ; I wish you to go over these writings with me to-night, to see that they are all correct, in order that you may make no mistake in the entries at the Custom House. You are sure these are duplicates ?”

“I copied them myself, Mr. Mordant, and will take my oath of their correctness.”

“I am satisfied, Mr. Grindley, and your services shall be well rewarded. There were no suspicions about the non-insurance ?”

“The matter was spoken of,” replied Grindley, who as the reader will perceive was a clever and cunning, though pliant tool in the merchant’s hands—and who was generally supposed to be merely a clerk in Mr. Mordant’s employ. “The matter was spoken of, but I effectually silenced any unpleasant remarks that might have been made, by observing that you had so much merchandise embarked—in so many and such varied channels—that you found it cheaper to risk an occasional loss than to pay the immense sum that the insurance companies would annually draw from you.”

"Quite right, Mr. Grindley, quite right; but how will that apply with regard to the Stormy Petrel, which will sail for Calcutta on the first of next month. She *must* be insured, you know."

"Oh, we must make her an especial case. Such a valuable cargo on board, you see; insured by other merchants in different offices, and so much of your own merchandise on board besides, that in this case you think it really advisable to insure."

"You are a sharp fellow, Grindley," said the merchant, laughing. "Let me see—I promised you \$1000 if the Albatross came cleverly through her former voyage, and \$1000 more if you succeeded in getting her clear off to sea on the present occasion. In both cases you have succeeded admirably. Here is a check for the amount, I brought it with me from town to-day" (handing Grindley a paper).

"Thank you, sir," replied Grindley, "you will always find me ready and I trust able to serve you."

"Help yourself to some wine, Grindley," said the merchant.

"By the by," said Grindley, after helping himself to a glass of wine; "did you hear of the discovery of the body of a female found floating in the river, near Hoboken, yesterday?"

"I saw a paragraph to that effect in the morning papers, but these things are of such common occurrence, I took no heed of it"—answered the merchant.

"The body appeared as though it had been about a fortnight in the water," continued Grindley; "it was a silly thing in me, perhaps! but I couldn't help thinking it might have been the body of the young lady, Miss Miller—who has been unaccountably absent from her home about that time."

"Oh no—impossible! impossible," exclaimed Mr. Mordant. "Miss Miller is distantly related to our family. I would not have such a report get abroad for anything, Mr. Grindley."

"Then of course, sir, it shall go no further—but pardon me. Have you any idea whether Captain Seymour knew anything of Miss Miller's abduction, or elopement, or disappearance in some way or other? They were said to have been very intimate, and he was in her company—near the spot where this body was found—not many days before she was missing."

"Mr. Grindley," said the merchant, "the subject of Miss Miller's disappearance is a painful one to me. I beg that you will not again allude to it in my presence, nor say anything to any one about the inquest held on the unfortunate female's body yesterday, in connection with Miss Miller's name. Rest

assured, however, that Captain Seymour knew nothing of Miss Miller, further than as a friend whom he met at my house, and to whom he paid the compliment of two or three calls at the house of her mother."

"I am aware," answered Grindley, "that the subject must be a painful one. It was mere thoughtlessness on my part that induced me to mention the matter. Of course, at your request, I shall be silent upon it in future."

"You will find your account in following my wishes, in that regard, Mr. Grindley," returned the merchant, "and now I will wish you good night. Mrs. Mordant and my daughters will be getting anxious for my appearance in the parlor."

"Good night, sir, and success to the second trip of the Albacross, and to her gallant commander, Captain Seymour," replied Grindley.

"I thank you, Mr. Grindley," answered the merchant, as his visitor descended the stairs. Mr. Mordant sat for some time, silently and thoughtfully gazing upon the fire. There was a gloom upon his brow, which but little comported with his late hilarity. At length he rose, looked most timidly around him, and shuddered slightly, as exclaiming—

"No, no—that could not be—I will not believe it," he descended the stairs himself, and joined the party in the parlor.

It comprised on this evening only his own family, consisting of his wife, the two daughters already introduced to the reader, and his son Charles, a young man of about twenty-five years of age, who was nominally studying for the bar, in Boston, but who had, for a month or two past, been on a visit to his father and mother.

This youth was living a gay life upon the liberal allowance he received from his father, and the credit he could readily obtain on the security of his future expectations. Charles Mordant rather liked to be thought what is vulgarly called a "fast man," and, therefore, he spent more money than was convenient to himself, and indulged in vices and debaucheries that were injurious to his health, not so much because he took pleasure in them as to distinguish himself from "slow men," whom he, in common with his companions, held in scorn and contempt.

He had visited his family with the object of persuading his mother to induce his father to foot some pretty heavy bills he had incurred in Boston, and on this evening he had succeeded

in obtaining her promise to enlist herself on his side. The old lady doted on her son, and he had persuaded her that his allowance was quite inadequate to his position in life.

His private *tête-à-tête* with his mother had been interrupted by his father's entrance. A short silence ensued, and then Sarah, the eldest sister, by way of starting a new subject of conversation, alluded to the mention in the morning papers of the discovery of the drowned body of a female in the river between Jersey City and Hoboken.

"Did you see the report in the paper, Charles?" she asked of her brother.

A slight shudder passed over the frame of the young man, and his face turned pale, as he replied:—

"I glanced at the paragraph; but I never read such things—they depress my spirits and make me nervous."

"Why, Charles," retorted his sister, "one would think the ghost of the woman had passed before your mental vision. My brother Charles frightened by a newspaper paragraph! Ha, ha, ha!"

"What a very shocking thing it is when viewed in connection with the singular disappearance of Jane Miller," said Mary Mordant, taking up the subject of conversation.

"Very shocking, indeed; if the body found in the river was really hers," said Charles, speaking in a tone of forced calmness: "but such things happen every day."

"Yes, but not in *our* circle," interrupted the eldest sister. "It's so much more dreadful when these things occur in *our* set."

"Jane Miller was hardly entitled to that distinction," said Mary. "You know the Millers are so *dreadfully* poor."

"But, unfortunately, Mrs. Miller happens to be one of those terrible bores called 'poor relations,' whom one can never get rid of," replied Sarah Mordant.

"I do desire that the unfortunate occurrence may never be alluded to in my presence," suddenly interposed Mr. Mordant, who had apparently, for some minutes past, with difficulty restrained himself from interrupting the conversation. "Jane Miller has disgraced herself—let us forget her, otherwise we may share in the disgrace."

"By all means, my dear papa," exclaimed Sarah. "I assure you I never had any great store of love for Jane Miller—the forward, conceited thing! She—so poor as she was, to think herself pretty! and give herself such airs in company."

"And then, how dowdily she always dressed," said Mary; "I'm sure the silk dress she used to wear at our parties, to which *ma would* invite her, was quite shabby. I was really ashamed to acknowledge her; and—that reminds me, pa," she continued, running to the old gentleman and kissing him, "that you promised to buy me a mantilla as soon as the latest fashion from Paris came out at Madame De La Tour's. They came out yesterday. Now, pa, you must keep your promise—musn't he, Sarah?"

"To be sure, and so he will," said Sarah, in her turn drawing near to her father, throwing her arms around his neck, and kissing his forehead.

"You are a couple of coaxing minxes," said the merchant, gently disengaging himself from his daughters' embrace; "but your old father will be as good as his word, only let me never hear Jane Miller's name mentioned by either of you."

So saying, he placed a roll of bills in the hands of his eldest daughter, adding, laughingly, "Deal fairly with your sister Mary, Sarah."

The two girls skipped playfully away from his side, and resumed the seats they had occupied at the table when the old gentleman had entered the room.

Charles looked wistfully at the bills; but, at a sign from his mother, he thought it advisable to keep silent on the subject of money until she had prepared the way with his father, and the remainder of the evening was spent in general conversation.

Some few weeks after this, the merchant received a letter from a correspondent on the coast of Africa, which occasioned him much unexpected annoyance; but we must reserve the details to a future chapter.

CHAPTER V.

The origin of the Cabin boy, and a brief history of his family—leaving more to be explained hereafter.

IN a neat little cottage on the coast of Maine, near Camden, Penobscot Bay, there resided, some few years prior to the date of the commencement of our story, a widow lady named Martin. Her husband had been an officer in the United States army; but, for many years before his death, he had retired from the service, in consequence of ill health and infirmity superinduced

by the fatigues he had gone through during the campaign of 1812-14 in the course of which he had been twice severely wounded. At the close of the war he had retired to a small property in the locality we have mentioned, which he had inherited from his father. Here his health had rapidly improved, and although already past the middle age, he had, to the surprise of every one, for he was considered to be a confirmed old bachelor, taken unto himself a wife, several years younger than her husband, who bore him three children, William and Frank and Sarah, the second of whom has already been introduced to the reader on board the Albatross.

Lieutenant Martin, however, did not live long after the birth of his daughter, and at the period of his death, the eldest boy, William, had but just attained his tenth year.

Frank was three years younger, and little Sarah was only two years of age.

Mrs. Martin was left by her husband in rather straitened circumstances, although in the distant part of the country where she resided and where living was much more moderate than in the cities, she had sufficient, with the practice of economy, to support her family in comfort.

It was a wild romantic spot where the cottage was situated, overlooking as it did, the rude and stormy bay. Yet it was not devoid of natural beauties. In summer it would have been considered a pleasant spot by the tourist, if ever any summer tourist had thought of venturing so far in search of health or pleasure—for the cottage stood in an ornamental enclosure, plentifully supplied with evergreens and such hardy shrubs and trees as would withstand the rigors and exposures of the winters of that latitude, while the wide parterres of flowers, which bloomed and blossomed in profusion, enchanted the eye with their gorgeous colors and loaded the surrounding atmosphere with their perfume—the smooth green-sward in front of the house—the neat gravel walks edged with box bush—the pretty secluded cottage almost hidden amidst the woodbine and sweetbriar bushes, which clambered over the walls and roof, and clustered around the windows, showed a marked and agreeable contrast with the dark rugged cliffs which formed the background of the landscape, for the cottage stood in a dell or ravine, apparently created by some sudden convulsion of nature at a remote period, which seemed to have severed the huge cliff that towered above and around, and opened an agreeable valley, in which the verdure that was denied to the surround-

ing exposed lands, grew and flourished in perfection, all the more grateful to the eye, in consequence of the barren, bleak aspect of the mountain scenery. On both sides and in the rear the cottage was sheltered from the winds by tall over-hanging cliffs, which, in summer time were clothed in a scanty garb of brownish moss of a neutral tint, which well set off, in a sort of frame-work, the fresh verdure of the valley. In front were the waters of the bay, above which the cottage stood at an elevation of some three hundred feet ; this in summer was an additional attraction, but in winter it looked bleak and cheerless—although a jut of land stretching for a mile into the bay on the southern side of the valley, protected it in a great measure, from the rude breezes of the open ocean. A winding descent led from the eminence on which the cottage was located to the sea beach, which formed a narrow rim at the foot of the cliff, the sea, at high water rushing up to its base, in which it had worked several dark, gloomy caverns, wherein numerous sea birds had taken up their abode.

Such was the appearance of the home of Frank Martin, and it is not to be wondered at, that with these associations around them from their earliest childhood, the two sons of the widow should, at an early period, have shown a strong predilection for a sea life. Their hours of leisure were spent in playing upon the sea-shore, sailing mimic ships in the pools left on the beach by the receding waves—paddling amongst the slimy rocks, and gathering seaweed—or scaling the cliffs and penetrating into the dark, gloomy caverns in search of the eggs of sea-birds ; and from the period they first began to lisp, they expressed a wish to become sailors. Until the death of Lieutenant Martin, the boys being mere children, these expressions were laughed at by their parents, but when the widow was left the sole protector of her family, she sought, by every means in her power, to dissuade her children from thinking of a sea life, and endeavored to turn their inclinations into some other channel. With William she succeeded. He was of a more sober, sedate disposition than his younger brother, generally not so much liked by his boyish companions, for he was fond of making shrewd bargains with them, and always managing to gain the upper hand ; but he was a much greater favorite with the schoolmaster at Camden, who praised him highly for his diligent attention to his studies, and his serious behavior in school hours, while Frank was a young scapegrace, generally at the bottom of his class, except when he chose to exert him-

self to learn some favorite lesson, when his natural aptitude enabled him to master it in advance of most of his class-fellows. Frank was, however, the idol of his school-fellows and playmates, and if the widow entertained any partiality towards either of her sons, it was towards her second son, Frank, although she always said, and always tried to persuade herself, that her sedate son William was the better behaved and more affectionate lad of the two.

At the age of fifteen, William Martin had, through the kind influence of a friend of the widow's late husband, been taken into the office of a lawyer at Augusta, where, at the date on which our story commences, he had resided four years. Frank, as soon as his brother had gone forth from his mother's roof, to make his own way in the world, began to urge the widow to consent to his wishes and give him her permission to go to sea—although at this time he was but thirteen years of age. This the widow would not consent to, and his sister Sarah also added her persuasions to her mother's, for truly the widow had reason to dread the vicissitudes of the treacherous element; she was the daughter of a sea captain, who had perished at sea while engaged on a whaling voyage from Nantucket. She thought that there was a fatality attending those of her family who ventured upon a sea life—and hence shrunk with dread from the idea of either of her own children becoming sailors; but all was of no avail—a sailor Frank Martin was resolved upon being—and although he did not plead any longer with his mother, after once or twice seeing her weep when he had pressed the subject with unusual warmth, for Frank was an affectionate boy—for all his high spirits and mischievous pranks—he secretly resolved that the sea should be his chosen profession at last, even if he had to wait for years to attain his object, and commence his initiation in the duty of gaining his own living in some other, and, to him, less congenial employment. One thing, however, he determined upon, *without* his mother's consent, he would not, while she lived, act against her wishes. He trusted to time to work a change in her ideas. Meanwhile he attended school regularly, and spent his leisure time as usual upon the beach or on the cliffs, where, on a fine day, he would stroll for hours, looking longingly upon the vast sluggish waters in the calm, or in imagination bounding in some gallant ship over the swelling billows as they danced and sparkled, and foamed whilst borne onward by the breeze.

We have as yet said little of Sarah Martin, but it is at least

necessary that we give a partial description of this, the youngest of the Widow Martin's family, since all the personages therein comprised will play their part individually in the due course of our narrative.

Sarah Martin, at this period, was only eight years of age; yet she already gave promises of exceeding loveliness. Hers was not, however, beauty of the showy, dashing description, calculated to make an instant impression on a heart sensitive to the influence of feminine attractions, often proving as evanescent as it is sudden and lively at the moment; beauty, but of that gentle, timid, retiring character, which gradually but surely winds its coils around the heart of the incantious beholder, and from which there is no escape—which only entangles him who struggles to get free still more deeply in its meshes. At this period Sarah was a lovely little girl, with large soft eyes, of a color which partook alike of a shade of blue and gray, with long silken eyelashes, which drooped gracefully over the lids when half closed, and dark, arched eyebrows, soft and silky as if drawn with a limner's pencil. Her hair was of a rich brown auburn, and fell in natural ringlets over her shoulders, forming a rich setting for her oval face, and pretty, regular, delicate features. She was very fond of her brother Frank, and as we have stated, would join her childish persuasions to those of her mother, and entreat him not to go to sea and be drowned, as she was sure he would be, if he ventured upon the treacherous element.

About six months after William Martin had gone to live in Augusta, he sent a few presents to his mother and brother and sister, not of great value in themselves, but as a proof of his remembrance of them, and his wish that they should share in the benefits derived from a gift bestowed upon him by his employer, as a proof of his satisfaction with his conduct.

Frank's share of his brother's generosity, consisted of two books, which William had evidently chosen with a just appreciation of his younger brother's tastes—the volumes consisted of Robinson Crusoe and Capt. Cook's voyages. Nothing could have been more acceptable to Frank, who greedily perused their contents, and wished he had lived in former years, and had had the good fortune to share the exploits and dangers and triumphs of the gallant and adventurous Cook and his companions; but Robinson Crusoe opened to his imagination a fairy world of delight. It was read and re-read, each time with increasing satisfaction. Every word was believed by the enthusiastic boy

to be strictly true, and Robinson Crusoe was envied as having been the happiest of mankind.

"Oh," sighed Frank, "Oh! that I could only be castaway upon some desert Island, without food or clothing, and amongst lots of savage cannibals. How happy I should be, and then if I could but get a Man Friday to help me to build a hut; and a parrot to call out, 'Frank Martin! poor Frank Martin!' and a cat to follow me about; and a goat-skin dress to wear. Oh, wouldn't it be jolly."

From much musing upon this subject, Frank began to conceive a plan of establishing a sort of Crusoe's dominion upon a rugged promontory, which extended from the lower section of the cliff beneath his mother's dwelling, and which was only accessible at low water, by scrambling over slimy and jagged rocks. Out of an old buffalo robe which he managed to purloin from the house, he manufactured a mock goatskin cap and coat, and his mother's tortoise shell cat supplied that important addition to Crusoe's household. A natural cave at one end of the promontory served for a ready-made habitation, as perfect as any Crusoe amateur could reasonably desire, and a parrot he had ready to hand, for the widow had a favorite parrot, which greatly to the wonder and distress of the lady, shared in the mysterious disappearance of the cat, and though it could not say, "Frank Martin! oh, poor Frank Martin!" it could and did screech, without ceasing, "What's o'clock, pretty Polly? Poll, what's o'clock?" and that temporarily answered the purpose. A Man Friday was a much more serious affair to be got over; but it was managed at last—all things can be managed by those who *will*—though the Man Friday was not a *human* subject of the amateur Crusoe. Frank pondered long upon this difficulty; his object was to do the thing properly; and therefore it was necessary that he should rescue his Man Friday from his pursuers, and that he should do it on a Friday, too—or else, how could the name be appropriate? Fortunately for the success of his scheme, one Friday just as he had stolen secretly over to his cave to revel in his fancies for a few hours, he was startled by the sound of a barrel organ—rather an unusual sound in those parts—and notwithstanding Frank was attired in his buffalo cap and all, he could not resist the curiosity that impelled him to find out whence the sound proceeded. He recrossed from the promontory, and peering round a projecting corner of the cliff, espied two Italian organ boys,

who were wending their way to Camden from the village of Lincolnville. Forgetting in his curiosity the oddity of his attire, he emerged from his hiding place—the boys saw his strange figure, and screaming with affright, taking him to be some strange and savage brute, they started to run with all haste along the pathway, while a monkey that was seated on the organ broke loose from them, and also impelled by fear, rushed down the cliff to the beach, and across the bridge of rocks which led to Frank's imaginary domain.

It was a Godsend to Frank—a Man Friday was on the very day of the week presented to his hand, actually flying from his captors and taking refuge in *his* cave, for in that recess, the poor frightened brute secreted itself, and was then easily captured by Frank—and therefrom retained a prisoner until it began to know and be attached to its master. The Italian boys grieved over the loss of their monkey, which they believed had fallen a prey to some monster which had suddenly sprung up from the deep ; but they never sought to recover it, being glad to make their own escape. Frank now had everything complete—and spent most of his leisure time in his cave, still poring over, and gathering fresh ideas with regard to his pursuits from his favorite volume. His mother and sister often remonstrated with him on account of his absenting himself so much from the cottage ; but he always excused himself, by saying that he had been strolling along the cliff, and thus carefully kept his secret.

One day, however, a cousin of the widow's—who was a sea captain, paid her a visit. He asked after her son Frank—Mrs. Martin replied that she supposed he was strolling upon the cliffs, to which amusement he showed a great partiality.

"Then," said the captain, "I will take a stroll out, and look about me, and perhaps I may fall in with the boy."

Thus saying, he took his hat and walked leisurely along the cliff. He saw nothing, however, of Frank, and was on the point of returning to the cottage, for it was growing dusk, when turning a point, his attention was arrested by a human figure beneath him, apparently struggling with the tide. It was Frank—who was also thinking of returning home, and who having waited until the water had nearly covered the bridge of rocks which formed the road to his domain, had stripped himself in order to cross without wetting his clothes, which he had tied up in a bundle and was carrying on his head. The captain gained the beach as quietly as possible, in the hope of

rescuing what he believed to be a lad struggling for life amidst the rocks, for he had no idea any one could have voluntarily placed himself in such a position, and he just arrived in time to see his young cousin land on the beach.

"Why, Frank!" cried he, in amazement, "what on earth have you been doing out on that jut of rock?"

"Nothing, Captain Dobson," replied Frank—to whom the captain was well known, and with whom he was a great favorite—"please wait till I put on my clothes, and I will go home with you; but don't say anything to mother or to Sarah."

"And why not, Frank?"

"Because—because," repeated Frank—"I often go there—and I don't want them to know."

"Why, what attraction is there, Frank? I shall step across myself, at low tide to-morrow, and see."

"Please don't," implored Frank.

The captain laughed. "Then tell me your secret," said he.

"Will you keep it?"

"That depends on circumstances. At all events, if there is no danger to yourself in it, I shall not say anything to annoy you."

"Then I will tell you," said the boy, after musing for some time, and he told his good natured cousin of his scheme.

"Upon my word," said the captain, laughing as he listened to the explanation. "I must visit this Robinson Crusoe's cave of yours, Frank—I will go with you to your domain to-morrow."

"You won't say anything about it to mother to-night?"

"No, make yourself easy on that score"—and thus chatting together, the captain and his young cousin wended their way along the cliff to the widow's cottage.

On the morrow Frank showed his cousin the mysteries of the promontory and the natural cave.

"And you have stolen the parrot that I brought your mother from the West Indies, the strange loss of which she has been lamenting to me. Oh, Frank, you should not have taken the parrot without your mother's leave, and the old tortoise shell cat. I declare! and what the d—l this? a monkey, by all that's wonderful.

"Why, what do you do with a monkey, Frank?"

"That's my Man Friday," replied Frank, gravely, and he proceeded to tell his cousin how he had got possession of it.

"Why, you are a most romantic youth," said the captain, after having given way to a burst of laughter, "but I must tell your mother where her parrot is secreted. What put such a fancy as this into your head?"

"I wish to be a sailor," replied the boy, "and mother won't let me; but I never will be anything else."

The captain was silent for some minutes; at length he said—

"Frank, I shall tell your mother what I have discovered, for I don't think it safe for you to visit this place. Some day you will be carried away by the tide in attempting to cross; but as a recompense for breaking up your favorite amusement, I will endeavor to persuade your mother to let you go to sea with *me*. I think I can manage it, since you are so determined upon it."

"Oh, if you can persuade her to that, your are welcome to tell her all."

That very evening the captain broached the subject to his cousin, and obtained her reluctant consent. The parrot and the favorite tortoise shell were returned to their mistress, who said little to her son with regard to their loss—for she had not the heart to breathe a word of reproach, now that he was about to leave her, and even jocko was well housed in a vacant dog kennel and taken under the protection of Sarah.

Frank's object thus unexpectedly obtained, the promontory was restored to its original solitude, and Frank, it was arranged, should go with his cousin to New York, and sail as cabin boy with him in one of Mr. Mordant's ships—which the captain commanded. A week from this period, after having bidden a tender adieu to his mother and sister, and receiving numerous warnings and admonitions from the former relative to his conduct, and with regard to the necessity of not exposing himself too much to the night air during his voyage, and always wearing a night cap when he went to bed, and saying his prayers, and reading his Bible, and keeping the Sabbath day holy, and various other advice, which the widow gave in her solicitude and ignorance of nautical habits, and which the youth promised to obey, which made the captain smile to himself—but did not think it necessary to explain; and, above all, bidding him never, never to forget his mother, and receiving a hundred kisses from his sister, and promising her treasures such as she had never dreamed of, to be brought from foreign parts, Frank Martin started with his cousin to New York, and was immediately installed as cabin boy in Captain Dobson's ship.

Frank found that he had many disagreeable duties to perform, that he had not thought of in his aspirations after a sailor's life ; but he was too manly to complain—and he set to work at once and cheerfully endeavored to fulfil his duties. A few weeks afterwards the vessel sailed—Frank having meanwhile written to his mother and sister, taking care to daub the letters with a little tar as an emblem of the change in his life—and to give the paper a true ship-like flavor.

He sailed several voyages with Captain Dobson, until the latter retired from the sea, and then, after a brief visit to his home, he was placed by Mr. Mordant, by his own request, on board the Albatross, where we first introduced him to the reader.

CHAPTER VI.

The Albatross on her voyage—Harry is startled by discovering a locket containing the portrait of a beautiful female in the captain's cabin, and discovers the original in the Recluse of Annabon.

WE left Captain Seymour in a great state of anxiety with regard to the character of the vessel which had been descried by the man on the look-out aloft. The second mate, who had been ordered by the captain to look through his glass and give his opinion, whether or not they were the topgallant sails of the stranger that he could discern from the deck, peered long and anxiously—

"I think, Captain Seymour, it is only a cloud—the outline seems undefined," said he, at length.

"I am half inclined to think so myself," responded the captain, putting aside his glass, and walking to and fro for some minutes ; he then raised the spy-glass again, and peered long in the same direction—

"No ; by heavens ! it is the upper sail of the stranger that I see. I can discern her topsails now—the haze is clearing."

As he spoke, the man aloft sung out, "On deck there."

"Halloa !" replied the captain.

"We are nearing the strange sail, sir. She must have seen us, and hove to. I can see the black line of her bulwarks since the haze has lifted."

"We must creep further to windward, Mr. Toleroft," said the captain. "See that the yards are braced sharp up."

"For'ard, there ! brace the yards sharp up," shouted the first mate.

"How does the vessel bear now, my man?" shouted the captain, when the order had been effected. "I have lost sight of the white speck again," he added, addressing the mate. "D—n this confounded haze—it's rising from the water like a thick fog."

"She was on our lee quarter this moment, sir," replied the man ; "but the fog is so thick that I have lost sight of her."

"Keep a bright look-out, and hail the deck if you catch a glimpse of her again," shouted the captain. "Keep her close, my man," he added to the man at the helm. "Quartermaster, see that the steering is well attended to. We will keep on this course for an hour or two, and then I will bear down upon her until I am satisfied as to her quality."

Having given this order he descended to the cabin to finish his breakfast. In the course of half an hour he was again on deck. The sun was shining forth brilliantly, and the heat was growing oppressive. The haze was fast clearing off ; and, in the course of a few minutes, the man aloft again hailed the deck, saying that he could distinctly see the outline of the hull again. The strange sail was soon seen distinctly from the deck, with the aid of the glasses, and it became very apparent that she was "lying to."

"It must be our consort, sir," said the mate. "Were she one of the cruisers she would have given chase, seeing us making to windward, for she must see that we don't mean to show fight."

"I rather incline to think it is," answered the captain ; "but it may be only a trick to deceive us. As to fighting, that is never worth while with an empty ship, where nothing is to be gained but hard blows. If we were full, it would be another matter. However," he added, "the wind is dying away, and it would be as well, now we are well to windward, to examine her closer, and satisfy ourselves. Square the yards, Mr. Tolcroft, and we will edge towards her at any rate."

The yards were squared and the mainsail hauled up, and thus the bows of the Albatross were brought to bear almost directly towards the stranger. The wind was now light, but an hour's sail brought the two vessels sufficiently near for the captains to scan each other with the aid of the spyglasses.

The stranger had squared her main yard, when the Albatross had altered her course, and, at the same time, had

diminished the speed she would otherwise have made, by hauling up both her courses and lowering her topgallant sails.

In this movement there was an evidence of a desire of nearer approach, and, at the same time, of caution, that satisfied the captain of the Albatross that he was right in his conjecture as to the character of the vessel, and that it was his expected consort that he had fallen in with. He hoisted his private signals, which, in the course of a few minutes, were responded to on board the other vessel, and the main yard of the stranger was again laid aback, and by this means, in a short time, the vessels were within hail of each other. Captain Seymour was the first to seize the speaking trumpet.

"Ship ahoy!" shouted he; "what ship is that?"

"The Dolphin," was the reply that came booming over the water, as the gruff voice of the commander of the strange vessel shouted in reply. "That is the Albatross, I presume," he continued, in a slightly foreign accent, "though I should scarcely recognize her, she looks so trim to what she was when I last saw her."

"The Albatross, it is," replied Captain Seymour. "How are you, Captain Junot. What's the news?"

"Ha! Captain Seymour," was the reply, now distinctly audible, as the vessels neared each other. "By gar, I am glad to see you. Vat is de news you shall ask? *Ma foi! c'est miserable.*"

"What is the matter? Have you no cargo on board?" asked the captain of the Albatross.

"Cargo—*non diable! sacre tonnere*, not von bit of luck I've had since I leave New Orleans."

"The devil!" exclaimed Seymour. Then he added: "Lower your boat, Junot, and come aboard, and let's hear the news in detail from your own lips."

Captain Junot gave the necessary orders to lower the boat, and in a few minutes he descended the side, and ordered his men to pull alongside the Albatross, on board of which he was cordially welcomed by Captain Seymour.

The boat's crew of the strange ship consisted of half a dozen rough-looking fellows, attired in red woollen caps and flannel shirts; while seated beside the captain, in the stern sheets, was a truculent, dark complexioned man, whose distinctive garb proclaimed him to be an officer, for he wore a fancifully-trimmed silk jacket, with a strip of gold lace on one shoulder, and a gold lace band around his cap.

Captain Junot himself was attired in a similarly fanciful uniform, the only difference in their dress being that the captain wore a gold badge on both shoulders. His personal appearance was even less prepossessing than that of his lieutenant, for he was a short, thick-set man, strongly marked with the small-pox, which disease had rendered one eye useless, and it remained fixed in the socket, while the other orb, small, but black as jet, rolled about incessantly beneath his low brow, and thick, heavy, grizzled eyebrows. His complexion was tanned almost to the blackness of a negro, and his thick and coarse hair, as well as the thicket of moustache and beard that covered the lower part of his face, concealing his mouth from view, was blanched to a dull grey. Add to this, the mark of a cicatrized wound across his furrowed cheek, which the forest of hair upon his face did *not* conceal, and it will be confessed that, despite his gay attire, Captain Junot was no Adonis.

A greater contrast could not exist between two human beings than existed between the captains of the two slavers, as they shook hands upon the deck of the Albatross.

The elegant form and handsome features of Captain Seymour looked still more elegant and handsome as he stood alongside his ill-favored comrade.

The other officer also appeared to be well known to Captain Seymour, for, after welcoming Junot on board, he extended his hand to his companion, saying—

“And you are welcome, too, *Senor Contramaestre*. I am glad to see you. Why I thought you were still in jail at Havana.”

“*Estese quieto Capitano*,” replied the individual thus addressed, in Spanish. “Gold opens all locks, however strong.” And he gave a knowing wink, which, although intended for pleasantry, singularly increased his ugliness.

“Come down into the cabin and let’s hear the bad news you speak of,” said Captain Seymour to his visitors; and then saying to the mate—

“Keep a good look-out, Mr. Tolcroft, that the vessels don’t come too close together,” he descended with the French commander and his Spanish *contramaestre* into the cabin.

From them he learnt, amidst a whole vocabulary of French and Spanish oaths, that the Dolphin had been for six weeks upon the coast watching an opportunity to run in shore; but the vicinity of that part of the coast, upon which they expected to find the living cargo they were in search of, was so

closely watched by British cruisers, that they had not dared to approach the land.

This information they had derived from a native war-canoe, belonging to King Kettle, who was the owner of the slaves that were in waiting for the expected ships, and who was allowed to sail to and fro along the coast, in consequence of the belief entertained that he was in league with the British to put down the system of slave dealing, so commonly practised by the native chiefs. The information of the anticipated arrival of two slavers, and of a large cargo of slaves being secreted somewhere along the line of coast, had been given by the captain of a merchant ship, trading for ivory, who had learnt it from a Krooman who had been inveigled by the chief into aiding him in procuring the slaves under false pretences, and who had paid the forfeit of his temerity by being tortured and sacrificed as a propitiatory offering to *Cassa Jumba* (the devil.) Bitter vengeance was sworn by Captain Junot and his mate if ever they fell in with the merchantman.

"But what metal do the cruisers carry?—they surely did not cruise in company?" replied Captain Seymour. "If I knew a cargo was awaiting me in any particular spot—although I am opposed to fighting, if it can be avoided—I would have risked the chance against a single cruiser, sooner than loose the spoil."

"*Madre de Dios!* the devils carry ten guns each," replied the *Contramestre*.

"*Sainte Vierge!*" exclaimed Captain Junot, in the same breath, "the Dolphin only carries six guns, and she would be quite unable to cope with the Englishman."

"Nevertheless, although the Albatross is a smaller vessel, and only carries the same armament, I shall not hesitate to approach the coast," replied Seymour.

"*Vous etes trop courageux Capitaine,*" said Junot, respectfully; for it was evident from the general bearing of the strangers that they acknowledged the captain of the Albatross as their superior.

If the test of superiority was left to the peculiar management, and the discipline maintained on board the two vessels, it was most surely in Captain Seymour's favor; for the Dolphin's decks would have given one an idea of the infernal regions let loose: yet she was a beautiful craft—small, not perhaps above four hundred tons register; but she had a smart and clipper-like look, and from the flashing of her bright copper, showing that she was in light sailing trim, the square cut

of her sails, the symmetrical arrangement of her spars and rigging, and her quarter boats—she looked so much like a man of war, that Captain Seymour was quite justifiable with regard to the caution he had observed in approaching her. With this, however, all similarity to a regular cruiser ceased ; although her crew was more numerous than that of the Albatross, consisting of forty-five or fifty hands, it was not, as in the case of the Albatross, composed of American seamen, but was a mixture, apparently, from the officers downwards, of all the nations under the sun—there even being several negroes amongst it—and the decks were dirty, the men lying idly about, except those actually on duty ; while no sort of discipline seemed to be maintained.

In the course of an hour, the captain and *contramæstre* of the Dolphin returned on board, and the two vessels parted company, the Albatross steering direct for the coast, while the fears of the captain of the Dolphin still urged him to hang aloof.

Henry Davis, who, when he shipped on board the Albatross, had not possessed the slightest idea of the real character of the vessel, found himself in a very uncomfortable position ; and he could not reconcile himself to the idea that Mr. Mordant could really be aware of the destination of his ship. His only confidant was Frank Martin ; and he being now engaged forward with the crew, he seldom was able to converse with him. The two lads did, however, now and then, in the first watch, find a few minutes leisure to chat together, and Frank did his best to cheer the spirits of his shipmate. If he felt any uneasiness himself, he never showed it before Harry ; but would say, in reply to the other's remarks :

“ We can't help it ; and therefore, my maxim is, ‘ Let us make the best of a bad bargain, and keep a still tongue in our heads.’ If we are heard to grumble, trust me, we shall soon become food for the sharks.”

As to Harry's expressed doubts of Mr. Mordant's knowledge of the destination of his vessel, he would reply :

“ Trust me, Harry, he knows all about it. I have heard hints of this before ; though, to tell the truth, I never believed them.”

“ But,” said Harry, during one of these conversations—for his ideas respecting the avocations of slavers were not very clearly defined, and he confounded them with those of pirates—of whose dreadful deeds he had often read—“ surely, we shall

not sink any peaceable merchant ships we come across and compel the crews to walk the plank, as I have read of?"

"No," Frank replied—"I don't suppose we shall; though, for the matter of that, I don't imagine Captain Seymour would miss a good chance where the risk was worth anything. I tell you, Harry, I have no good opinion of Captain Seymour; for all his good looks and gentle voice, when nothing ruffles his temper. But I often wonder what made you take to a seafaring life. You are so timid and quiet. There must have been some strange reason for your choice. I should like, some day, to learn your history."

"Perhaps, some day, and *too* soon, you may learn it," said Harry—speaking the last words inaudibly—as he left the deck to reply to the summons of the cabin bell.

The weather had become almost calm, and the Albatross made but very slow progress towards the point of her destination on the coast; and the captain passed a considerable portion of his time lolling on a sofa he had brought on deck, and placed beneath the awning. He was thus actuated, partly in consequence of the sultry weather, and partly by the natural anxiety he felt, as he neared the land and feared interruption from the cruisers.

One day, just after he had gone on deck, some duty or other called Harry into the after cabin, on the sofa in which the captain had been reclining. Lying upon the sofa was a locket with a piece of black ribbon attached to it, which Harry had frequently seen around Captain Seymour's neck. Curiosity prompted him to unclasp it, and the moment he did so he started back as if struck with a panic; his breath was for a moment suspended, and the blood forsook his cheeks, while the next moment it bounded back from his heart, dyeing his clear olive skin to the color of crimson. An ejaculation of pain burst from his lips, and he almost allowed the trinket to slip from his hands. In a few minutes, however, he recovered himself, and stood gazing intently upon the portrait in the locket, although his breast still heaved convulsively; and yet there was nothing apparently to cause this perturbation in the portrait he held in his hands. It was the face and bust of a most beautiful female, with the peculiar almond-shaped eyes of the maidens of the East, and a rich profusion of yellow hair, contrasting singularly with the rare beauty of the dark eyes and eyebrows and long silken eyelashes. The features were regular as those of the Greek Ideal; the brow was low and broad, the nose, mouth,

and chin of the purest Grecian cast, the nostrils thin and finely curved, almost seeming to breathe with life in the picture, the lips were of a rosy red, slightly parted, and displaying a row of teeth, white and even as pearls; and the complexion was of the clearest white and red. Harry could not withdraw his gaze. Was it the surpassing beauty of the portrait that enchanted him? So Captain Seymour appeared to think; for while the boy stood thus seemingly entranced, the captain descended into the cabin, unheard by him, and stood behind him, gazing intently upon him, apparently pleased with the admiration with which he fancied the boy was gazing upon the picture. He had always been particularly gentle and conciliating to Harry, treating him more like a companion than as his cabin boy, often lending him books, and appearing to find relief in his conversation from the rude companionship of his officers and crew, and he was not displeased with what he conceived the boy's admiration of the lovely countenance he was examining. At length he said—

“Why, Harry, you seem quite enchanted with that portrait. Well, in a few days you may perhaps see the original; but, my boy, you must not look upon *her* with such evident admiration,” and he smiled as he spoke—“or I shall grow jealous.”

Harry started, and again the color forsook his cheeks. Perhaps it was through fear—evidently the captain thought it was—for he continued:

“Boy! I am not angry with you. No one could look on that lovely face unmoved. I have admired many maidens—almost loved some—but I have never *really* loved any one but her.”

Harry trembled still in every limb, but the captain did not seem to observe him, for he took the locket from his hand, and sat himself down on the sofa, and for some minutes appeared buried in thought. His features assumed a mildness, almost a gentleness, that Harry had never before observed, even in his most pleasant moods.

“Harry,” he at length said, “I heard you reading aloud the other day; boy. You read well; your voice is soft and musical as a woman's. Come here and read to me. I am in a strange wayward mood to-day.”

Harry came forward at his captain's call, having hardly yet recovered his composure. He advanced to the book-shelves; but seemed to hesitate what book he should take down.

"Reach down Byron's poems, Harry," continued the captain, "and read from the 'Bride of Abydos,' commencing—

'Fair as the first that fell of womankind.'

and continue on through the verse."

Harry obeyed, and read in a voice that sounded tremulously sweet, the more so in consequence of the boy's emotion, until he had reached the concluding line—

"And oh, that eye was in itself a soul."

Captain Seymour had listened attentively to the first few lines, but ere the boy had concluded, his thoughts appeared to wander, for he did not for some moments observe that he had ceased. At length he raised his head and said—

"Most admirably read, boy. Where did you acquire that rich soft voice? It reminds me of—Bah!—no matter; turn over the pages and read the concluding lines of 'The Corsair,' commencing at the verse—

"'His heart was formed for softness, warped to wrong.'"

Again Harry read, and this time the captain sat gazing intently at him, and listening to the beautiful verses of the poem. It was concluded, and the captain repeated aloud, and half unconsciously, the last line,

"Linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes."

"That will do, boy," he said, "you can go. You are a good boy, and some day must tell me your history. You are not what you seem."

The boy started, and looked earnestly and half fearfully at the captain; but he was again, apparently, deeply absorbed in thought.

The captain's gentle mood did not last long. Towards evening of that very day it fell calm, and for a week the ship scarcely made any headway. The sea was smooth as the surface of a mirror, while a thin scum covered it as far as the eye could reach, and a light thin haze floated above to the height of two or three feet, which reflected a glare from the rays of the tropical sun, glancing perpendicular upon it, that was oppressive in the extreme, not only prostrating the physical faculties, but depressing, also, the spirits of the crew; the

sails hung in heavy folds against the masts, and the decks and sides of the vessel were so heated that the pitch fairly boiled out of the seams—while the iron and brass work was rendered too hot to be touched even by the hard, horny hands of the seamen. It was a situation calculated to try the temper of the most equable disposition, and Captain Seymour fretted and raged after a fashion that fairly terrified those with whom he came in contact. We have remarked, that hitherto he had been kindly disposed towards Harry ; now, however, he was querulous with him. Nothing pleased him ; his books, his chief companions during his leisure hours, were neglected ; and he was never a quarter of an hour at rest night or day. The crew felt the change severely ; hitherto he had issued his orders to the mates, having only on very rare occasions communicated them directly to the seamen. Now the watch was never at rest ; the sails were continually being uselessly shifted ; they were kept constantly wetted in the hope that they might catch and hold the slightest chance flaw of wind—the standing rigging was set up again and again, as it relaxed under the intense heat, and, at a time when it was a difficulty and trouble even to move, the men were kept constantly busy ; yet they dared not complain. There was something in the tone of Captain Seymour's voice, and in his look, that told them he was not to be trifled with. On one occasion, only, a stout, burly seaman ventured to grumble, though almost inaudibly, at what he conceived to be some unnecessary order. In a moment a powerful blow from the captain's muscular arm, well directed and aimed at the man's temple, laid him senseless upon the deck, cutting a deep wound, and causing a contusion of the brain. The poor man fell over the raised poop upon the deck below, but the captain merely turned to some of his messmates who were looking on in terror, and said calmly—more calmly than he had spoken for many days—

“Take that mutinous dog to his hammock and see to him,” and then resumed his orders as though nothing had happened.

At length the long looked for breeze sprang up, the almost stagnant sea resumed its billowy motion, the haze cleared away, and the Albatross went gaily bounding on her course at the rate of six knots an hour. The captain's good humor returned, and though he still remained a good deal on deck, he again left the management of his ship to his officers, contenting himself with the duty of keeping a sharp look-out around, often spending an hour at a time in the topmast cross tiers, scanning

the horizon with his glass in all directions. Harry had never yet been aloft, but one morning the captain ascended the rigging without his spyglass, and he called Harry to bring it up to him.

The boy obeyed, but in descending the cat-harpings, after having delivered the glass into the captain's hands, he suddenly became giddy—the ship careened over to a sudden gust of wind, and as she righted and slightly inclined over again to windward, he fell headlong into the sea. Fortunately he had fallen with the weather roll or he must have tumbled in board, and in all probability have been instantly killed—as it was, the coldness of the water restored him; he rose to the surface and attempted to swim. He was, however, evidently frightened, and unacquainted with the exercise, for he tossed his arms wildly about, and it was doubtful whether he could have kept himself above water until a boat could have been lowered to his rescue.

The captain had descended shortly after the boy had reached him the glass, and coming down the rigging more rapidly, he was only a few feet above him when he fell.

"Lay the main yard aback and lower a boat," he shouted, and the next moment he plunged into the water, and striking out, caught the struggling youth just as he was on the point of sinking for the second time. The boat was lowered, and both were brought on board—no mischief having occurred further than the fright which Harry had received.

"Go below and strip yourself, boy," said the captain to the lad—"a pretty fellow you are for a sailor. You have caused me to lose my best spy-glass—and that is more than you are worth. Here, stay," he added; "I will send Frank aft to help you—and send some dry clothes on deck to me."

"I can do without help," said the boy timidly.

"Pooh! nonsense. Here, Frank, go below and get this lubberly fellow some dry clothes."

Frank obeyed, and descended to the cabin with Harry, but he soon reappeared with a bundle of clothing for the captain, which Harry had desired him to carry up, and when Frank returned he found that Harry had already stripped himself and put on his dry clothing.

"You are smart enough in putting on your toggery, at any rate," said Frank. By Jove! it was lucky for you that the captain jumped overboard after you, or you would have gone to Davy Jones' locker, sure enough, before the boat could have reached you. I didn't give the captain credit for so much hu-



KING KETTLE AND THE IONAGA CHIEFS.

"The ornament, however, in the possession of which he chiefly prided himself, and from which he had derived his European appellation, was a small copper tea-kettle, polished to the utmost brightness, which was suspended from his shoulders by a leathern strap, and dangled against his posteriors as he walked."

manity. Well, he is a strange fellow ; I can't make him out," and seeing that his services were no longer needed, Frank returned to the deck.

A day or two afterwards the ship reached the meridian of Cape Palmas, and standing close hauled on the larboard tack, steered across the Gulf of Guinea—holding a W. S. W. course to Majumba, a port in Loango, to the northward of the capital, where the captain expected to find his cargo ready for him. A few days brought the vessel in sight of the small, beautifully wooded island of Annabon, the southern shore of which the Albatross closely hugged—so closely, indeed, that the enchanting scenery of the island was plainly distinguishable. The captain kept a white flag flying at the gaffend, all the time the land was in sight, and stood on the quarter deck with a spy-glass to his eye, intently gazing at one particular spot. The vessel was still a considerable distance from the shore, but some of the sailors said they fancied they could discern a similar white flag fluttering in the breeze amongst the dark green foliage. Whether or not, the captain seemed satisfied ; for as the island gradually receded from view he lowered his glass, and during the remainder of the day was in a particularly amiable temper. In the evening a double allowance of grog was issued to the crew, and for the first time during the voyage the mates were invited to dine at the captain's table.

Three days after they sighted the main land, and towards nightfall anchored off the little native town of Majumba.

In the course of the evening several canoes filled with negroes came on board, each canoe bearing a chief. They were, generally speaking, fine, athletic looking men, with forms that would have served as models for the sculptor's chisel, and as they were all entirely naked, every opportunity was given of judging of their physical perfection. They were unmistakably negroes, but they had nothing in common with the repulsiveness of the slave negro in their open countenances. They were deeply scarified across the chest and on the calves of the legs—not with the handsome, regular tattoo of the South Sea islanders, but with deeply cut, gaping, black wounds, which had cicatrized, and left frightful scars, the only drawback to their generally fine appearance. The chiefs, however, were distinguishable by their uncommon and unique finery, which appeared to have been borrowed from the cast-off dresses of some theatrical wardrobe, and scrambled for and appropriated promiscuously by the wearers.

The garments had probably been the gifts of various slave captains and captains of men-of-war and merchantmen, who had at different periods visited the coast, and the chiefs certainly presented a motley appearance. One, for instance, who seemed to think himself of no little importance, had decked himself out in a woman's flannel petticoat, over which he wore the red jacket of a marine, while a woollen nightcap covered his head, and his feet were encased, one in a dress pump, and the other in a huge sea boot. One had a sailor's jacket only, which he wore closely buttoned round his body, while all the rest of his person was entirely naked. Another took pride in a pair of blue navy pantaloons with gold lace stripes, but disdaining the servile fashion of crippling the limbs by wearing them in the ordinary manner, he wore them buttoned round his neck with the legs dangling behind. Some had nothing but vests; the garments of others were confined to a simple pair of knee-breeches—rarely, however, worn where breeches ought to be. One stalwart savage, totally naked otherwise, rejoiced in a pair of long woollen hose, drawn up above the knee, the feet of which having worn out, had been cut off at the ankles, and, ornamented with feathers, were worn about the owner's neck, and esteemed as a most powerful *fetish*, upon which no evil eye of man or beast could look and remain scathless; but the crowning glory of attire was that worn by the celebrated King Kettle, well known in the annals of the slave trade, and notorious for his skill and cunning in diplomacy, he having for a long period managed to keep on equal good terms with the commanders of the English ships of war that visited the coast and the captains of the slavers, who constituted his best customers. This cunning and powerful chief wore an old cocked hat, which he had himself gaily fringed with feathers; a blue dress coat, rather shabby and threadbare, but the shabbiness of which was in a great measure atoned for by a pair of officers' epaulettes which he had mounted on his shoulders. He had a stock about his neck, but no shirt, vest, or pantaloons, although a black silk apron was tied around his waist and hung down in front of his person, reaching nearly to his knees. He discarded stockings, probably on account of the heat of the climate; but his feet were encased in Blucher boots, considerably dilapidated. The ornament, however, in the possession of which he chiefly prided himself, and from which he had derived his European appellation, was a small copper tea-kettle, polished to the utmost brightness, which was suspended from his shoul-

ders by a leathern strap, and dangled against his posteriors as he walked.

The interior contained a varied and valued, if not valuable, assortment of sea shells, pieces of old iron and copper, and pebbles, which made a most confounded clatter as his majesty walked along with haughty stride, the kettle banging against him at every step. It had been especially blessed by the sorcerers, and was considered the most powerful *fetish* in the country, and the source of all King Kettle's power and influence.

Most of the members of this motley group were welcomed as old acquaintances by Captain Seymour and his first and second mates, while the third mate and several of the crew were also recognized by them, thus proving that although it was their first voyage on board the Albatross, it was not their first visit to the slave coast.

The conversation was chiefly carried on in Spanish and French—few of the natives, not excepting the chiefs, being able to speak more than a few words of broken English.

Aguardiente was the first thing asked for, and then tobacco in the leaf, both of which were moderately supplied. On being questioned by the captain, the chiefs informed him that the whole line of coast from Majumba as far south as Loanda had been for many weeks narrowly watched by two British men-of-war, and King Kettle had found it necessary to remove his slaves to Quaddah, a village on the Zaire river, beyond where it was unnavigable by any thing but native canoes, and a distance of seven days' journey from the coast, in consequence of the men-of-war's boats having pulled a great many miles up the river.

King Kettle also mentioned with pride and satisfaction that he had entrapped the captain and crew of the brig that had given information to the men-of-war, and had massacred them all, and to prevent suspicion, had burnt the vessel, after having robbed her of every portable article. It would, he added, be at least half a moon or more before the slaves could be brought back to the coast, although he believed the King of England—as he termed the ships-of-war—had got tired of waiting, and fancying the information had been false, had sheered off, and had not been seen for nearly a moon.

Captain Seymour, finding that he had a great deal of leisure time on hand, left the management of the vessel, until the arrival of the slaves, to his mates, and resolved to pay a visit, on

The garments had probably been the gifts of various slave captains and captains of men-of-war and merchantmen, who had at different periods visited the coast, and the chiefs certainly presented a motley appearance. One, for instance, who seemed to think himself of no little importance, had decked himself out in a woman's flannel petticoat, over which he wore the red jacket of a marine, while a woollen nightcap covered his head, and his feet were encased, one in a dress pump, and the other in a huge sea boot. One had a sailor's jacket only, which he wore closely buttoned round his body, while all the rest of his person was entirely naked. Another took pride in a pair of blue navy pantaloons with gold lace stripes, but disdaining the servile fashion of crippling the limbs by wearing them in the ordinary manner, he wore them buttoned round his neck with the legs dangling behind. Some had nothing but vests; the garments of others were confined to a simple pair of knee-breeches—rarely, however, worn where breeches ought to be. One stalwart savage, totally naked otherwise, rejoiced in a pair of long woollen hose, drawn up above the knee, the feet of which having worn out, had been cut off at the ankles, and, ornamented with feathers, were worn about the owner's neck, and esteemed as a most powerful *fetish*, upon which no evil eye of man or beast could look and remain scathless; but the crowning glory of attire was that worn by the celebrated King Kettle, well known in the annals of the slave trade, and notorious for his skill and cunning in diplomacy, he having for a long period managed to keep on equal good terms with the commanders of the English ships of war that visited the coast and the captains of the slavers, who constituted his best customers. This cunning and powerful chief wore an old cocked hat, which he had himself gaily fringed with feathers; a blue dress coat, rather shabby and threadbare, but the shabbiness of which was in a great measure atoned for by a pair of officers' epaulettes which he had mounted on his shoulders. He had a stock about his neck, but no shirt, vest, or pantaloons, although a black silk apron was tied around his waist and hung down in front of his person, reaching nearly to his knees. He discarded stockings, probably on account of the heat of the climate; but his feet were encased in Blucher boots, considerably dilapidated. The ornament, however, in the possession of which he chiefly prided himself, and from which he had derived his European appellation, was a small copper tea-kettle, polished to the utmost brightness, which was suspended from his shoul-

ders by a leathern strap, and dangled against his posteriors as he walked.

The interior contained a varied and valued, if not valuable, assortment of sea shells, pieces of old iron and copper, and pebbles, which made a most confounded clatter as his majesty walked along with haughty stride, the kettle banging against him at every step. It had been especially blessed by the sorcerers, and was considered the most powerful *fetish* in the country, and the source of all King Kettle's power and influence.

Most of the members of this motley group were welcomed as old acquaintances by Captain Seymour and his first and second mates, while the third mate and several of the crew were also recognized by them, thus proving that although it was their first voyage on board the Albatross, it was not their first visit to the slave coast.

The conversation was chiefly carried on in Spanish and French—few of the natives, not excepting the chiefs, being able to speak more than a few words of broken English.

Aguardiente was the first thing asked for, and then tobacco in the leaf, both of which were moderately supplied. On being questioned by the captain, the chiefs informed him that the whole line of coast from Majumba as far south as Loanda had been for many weeks narrowly watched by two British men-of-war, and King Kettle had found it necessary to remove his slaves to Quaddah, a village on the Zaire river, beyond where it was unnavigable by any thing but native canoes, and a distance of seven days' journey from the coast, in consequence of the men-of-war's boats having pulled a great many miles up the river.

King Kettle also mentioned with pride and satisfaction that he had entrapped the captain and crew of the brig that had given information to the men-of-war, and had massacred them all, and to prevent suspicion, had burnt the vessel, after having robbed her of every portable article. It would, he added, be at least half a moon or more before the slaves could be brought back to the coast, although he believed the King of England—as he termed the ships-of-war—had got tired of waiting, and fancying the information had been false, had sheered off, and had not been seen for nearly a moon.

Captain Seymour, finding that he had a great deal of leisure time on hand, left the management of the vessel, until the arrival of the slaves, to his mates, and resolved to pay a visit, on

private business of his own, as he stated, to the island of Annabon, and with this object he ordered the large pinnace which the Albatross carried for the purpose of sailing up the rivers, after slaves, to be got ready, and supplied with a fortnight's provisions, and taking with him half a dozen of his men and the cabin boy, Harry, he immediately set sail for the island.

Making long stretches during the day, and taking advantage of the land breezes at night, the pinnace reached Annabon in three days from leaving Majumba, and Captain Seymour landed at a native Portuguese village, consisting of a score or two of wretched huts, and taking Harry with him, leaving his crew to take charge of the pinnace, he walked a mile or two from the village along a wild native road skirting the ocean, and winding amidst some of the richest verdure and most enchanting scenery that the world can produce. Mangoes, bananas, limes, and other tropical fruits, hung in clusters on the bushes that skirted the road, which was little more than a beaten foot-path—the trees forming an archway over the head at an elevation of sometimes a hundred feet, thus sheltering the traveler from the ardent solar rays, without obstructing the free current of air from the ocean. After having proceeded for two miles, they came upon a cultivated clearing amidst the forest, open to the sea—which was thickly studded with negro huts—and in the rear of which was a small cottage with a verandah running around it after the style of a West Indian country residence. A winding walk led to the cottage, edged on either side with mango and other fruit trees in full blossom, or bearing rich clusters of ripe fruit which perfumed the atmosphere. Several negroes welcomed the appearance of the captain in Portuguese and broken Spanish; but he cautiously enjoined silence, and reached the cottage without being observed by any of its inmates.

He entered the door without ceremony, appearing to be well acquainted with the place, and proceeded to an inner apartment—bidding Harry wait in the passage.

As the captain entered, Harry heard a musical female voice exclaim, in tones of delight, "*Ah! Caro mio Quien es V*"—a light, bounding step flew to meet him—and then was heard the soft, indistinct murmur of mutual caresses—the door was closed, and all was silent.

In a few minutes the captain came out of the room, and taking a carpet bag which Harry had carried up from the boat, he took from it a small casket, which he desired Harry to carry

into the room, while he looked over the contents of the bag—adding, “Harry, I told you one day at sea you should see the original of that portrait you so much admired; but beware, boy,” he continued laughingly, “beware of my warning.”

Harry felt as if he had been transported into some scene of enchantment. He scarcely knew what the captain said, but he mechanically took the casket and entered the room. At the first glance he was still more astonished and bewildered by the light and airy elegance of the apartment. It appeared as though by some magic spell a fairy abode had been dropped in the midst of a primeval wilderness; but turning his head, an object met his gaze which attracted all his attention, for, lounging in a languid yet elegant posture, upon a crimson silk ottoman, was the original of the portrait in the locket, far surpassing in rich, living loveliness, the exquisite beauty of the painting. She was attired in a Greek costume, and a negress, fancifully dressed, was seated near her, holding a huge fan in her hand, with which it appeared she had been fanning her lovely mistress. Harry had read of the exquisite refinement and beauty of the interior arrangements of the dwelling of the favored mistress of a Turkish harem. To his fancy it seemed as though he had been suddenly transported into one of these forbidden abodes. He stood transfixed with astonishment, and a mingling of overwhelming sensations. So much was he bewildered, that he even hesitated when the sweet voice of the lovely loungeur bade him approach and deliver into her hands the gift of her HUSBAND.

“*Habla V. Castellano?*” she added, noticing the hesitation of the youth.

“*Me alegro mucho de ver a V. Que es esto !*” pointing to the casket.

Thus addressed, although he knew but little of Spanish, Harry advanced to the lady and placed the casket in her hand.

“*Muchisimos gracias,*” she replied, as she opened the box, and took thence a jewelled miniature of Captain Seymour.

CHAPTER VII.

A letter from a correspondent of Mr. Mordant's at Sierra Leone—Another anonymous letter received by the Widow Miller—A letter from Captain Seymour, denying any knowledge of the abduction of Jane Miller—Some account of the widow's family—Charles Mordant endeavors to obtain money on the security of his expectations.

WE mentioned in a former chapter that Mr. Mordant had received a letter from a correspondent on the African coast, which occasioned him some considerable uneasiness. The letter was from his factor at Fernando Po, and it stated that the ship *Dolphin*, Captain Junot, commander, in the success of which he had some considerable interest, had, he had learnt, been driven from the coast in consequence of the rigid watch after slavers that was kept up by the British cruisers, and he feared that a fine assortment of slaves, admirably adapted for the Cuban market, would be lost. He added that the *Albatross*, under the command of Captain Seymour, was expected shortly to arrive upon the coast, and although he had great confidence in Captain Seymour's judgment and discretion, he feared he might rush on to his destruction. There was sufficient in this letter to occasion the merchant a great deal of uneasiness. To be sure, if the *Albatross* should be captured, he thought he would not actually lose money, but he would miss a fine opportunity of making it, which was as much to be deplored as would be an actual loss; but this was not all. The honest, upright, straightforward, and, in the estimation of mankind, most worthy merchant, was fearful that, if the *Albatross* should be suddenly captured, without giving time for Captain Seymour to make such preparations as he might think advisable, his own good name might suffer, since there were numerous letters and other matters that might be readily traced to him.

Meanwhile Mr. Mordant was considerably harassed by the importunities and complaints of the widow Miller, who was, as the reader is well aware, still troubled with doubts in regard to the fate of her child. At first she had been almost satisfied that the body of the unfortunate female found in the river had been her daughter's, though she was at a loss to account for the manner of her death; then again doubts arose in her mind, in consequence of the knowledge that certain articles of her daughter's scanty wardrobe and store of jewelry had been car-

ried off, which were just the articles she imagined she would have chosen to carry with her herself had she been going anywhere upon a long visit. Amidst all these doubts she began to credit the suspicion that had arisen in her mind that Captain Seymour must have been concerned in her flight from home, and that possibly he had managed to secrete her somewhere, and she might be still living. The mother's heart clung to this belief, and she besought Mr. Mordant to make such inquiries of Captain Seymour as should set her mind at rest. To add to her distress and uncertainty, though she did not place much faith in anonymous letters, she had received a third letter from the same singular and mysterious correspondent, which contained the following lines :

“Madam, grieve not for the *death* of your child, if you would sooner know that she still lived, though forever disgraced, than that she had passed away from the earth forever. The body of the unfortunate female found in the North River was *not* that of Jane Miller.”

The ambiguous phraseology of this letter troubled the widow exceedingly. It was scarcely comprehensible to her. Sometimes she thought that some person was trifling with her, but she could not bring herself to believe that any one could be so heartless, merely for the sake of mystifying her and gratifying a cruel propensity to sport with her harrowed feelings.

She called, therefore, at the office of Mr. Mordant, down town, and implored him so earnestly to write to Captain Seymour, and ascertain truly whether he knew any thing respecting her daughter's fate, promising even, if he would only relieve her anxiety, to pardon him the wrong he might have done to her daughter and herself, that the merchant promised to write, and as he was himself anxious to know how Captain Seymour had succeeded, and whether the fears of his agent had proved groundless, he did write by the very earliest mail to Fernando Po.

It was of course a long time before any answer was received ; and when, at last, a letter from the Captain arrived, Mr. Mordant was relieved of a great deal of anxiety, for Seymour said that he had evaded the cruisers—indeed they had, he believed, left the vicinity of the Loango coast before he arrived there ; that he had secured a prime lot of negroes— young and healthy—and that there was still a sufficient cargo left to fill up the Dolphin when she should arrive, which she

had not done at the date of his writing. Then followed a few words of badinage at the poltroonery of Captain Junot, and the captain concluded his letter in the following words :

“By the way, there is one subject mentioned in your letter which has occasioned me a great deal of uneasiness and annoyance. You ask me if I know any thing of the unfortunate young lady, Jane Miller, and insinuate that probably I might have abducted or kidnapped her from her home and carried her on board the Albatross. You hint, also, that if I have so done, you will look it over, if I can manage to set her on shore somewhere on the coast, or in the Brazils, on my return, so that the affair may not be noised about in New York—and further, that if her mother is satisfied that the girl is living, she will be relieved from much anxiety, and yourself from much unpleasant importunity, if she is made aware that her daughter is in some foreign land—and that under such circumstances you will take measures to enable her to rejoin her. I desire to inform you *positively*, that no one, even amongst her own relations—setting aside her mother—was more shocked than I was myself, when I heard of her disappearance. I did not seek to entice her on board the Albatross, and she is not on board that vessel; but if she were I would not act up to your expressed wishes regarding her. I know that I am accounted a sad fellow amongst females—but I wish you to know that I am incapable of premeditated cruelty to any woman, however much I may disregard the feelings of the sterner sex. I paid considerable attention to Miss Miller when I was last in New York—more, much more than I was justified in doing. I thought her a most fascinating girl. I was at her mother's house only a day or two before her mysterious disappearance, and I walked out with her. Our conversation was serious, and when I quitted her, after conducting her home, I left her weeping. I will confess I have had sad forebodings respecting her fate; but although my own conscience might not acquit me, if any thing serious should have happened to her, I am at least legally innocent of any crime against her. You are at liberty to show this letter, or rather this postscript, to Mrs. Miller, and to rest assured I am writing the truth. I positively know nothing respecting the fate of Jane Miller.”

The merchant delivered the postscript into the widow's hands. He and she both felt satisfied that the captain had written the truth, and the widow went home in despair; the

last straw of hope at which the drowning wretch catches, was snatched from her.

As to Mr. Mordant, he was much annoyed at the tone of the latter portion of the letter. He perceived that Captain Seymour knew full well the independent position which he held with regard to the merchant—his nominal employer—and he saw that it would be necessary for him in future to be guarded in his expressions in order that he might not offend the young seaman ; besides, he was disappointed to a certain degree, because Jane Miller was not on board the Albatross. He would far sooner she had been forever cast off and lost to society, than that subsequent discoveries should prove that the drowned female was really her, as thus a sort of stigma might attach itself to his family, in consequence of the distant connection with the deceased.

When the clerical cousin of Mr. Mordant had died, he had left his little property in the hands of the merchant, who was at that time a much poorer man than he was at the date in which our story opens ; but being even then extensively engaged in mercantile business, the simple-hearted clergyman had believed that he would do his best to increase the property, so that on her attaining her majority, Jane might have at least a comfortable dowry to carry with her to the man whom she might marry. The widow had some little property of her own, and it was therefore with his wife's full consent that he had devised his daughter's property to be subjected to the management of her guardian.

Mrs. Miller had been informed a few years afterwards that there was a flaw in the title deeds of the property, and that it had been given up in consequence of an original Dutch claim having been preferred ; and as she had perfect trust in the integrity of her late husband's cousin, she had believed him, and had instituted no inquiry. She had expressed her regret at the unfortunate change in her child's future prospects, and that was all. Thus matters had stood between the two families up to the period of the present history.

Charles Mordant, notwithstanding he had received a considerable addition to his allowance from his father, in consequence of the pleading of his mother in his behalf, still found that his expenses far outstripped his income, and he at length came to the resolution to endeavor to raise some money upon the security of his future expectations. With this object in view he called upon a lawyer, who had done some rather dirty

work for him two or three times before, and asked his advice how to proceed, guaranteeing him an ample remuneration, if he would procure him an advance of money.

By the suggestion of this crafty limb of the law, he managed to procure a copy of his father's will, informing him also of all the circumstances that he was acquainted with relative to his father's affairs. The lawyer promised to consider the matter, and desired the young man to call again in a day or two, and he probably by that time might be able to assist him. This the youth agreed to, and at the appointed time he waited upon the lawyer.

"You see, I am true to appointment, Mr. Harvey," said he, gaily. "What can you do for me now, old fellow ; come, let's hear what you have resolved upon?"

"I think I may be able to raise some money, Mr. Charles," said the lawyer, "but there is one thing I wish to ask you about ; that little property in New Jersey ? Are you sure that belongs to your respected parent, or does he only hold it on trust?"

"I am sure he claims it as his own and receives the rents. I have often heard him chuckle over the rapid increase in its value. Why, Harvey, ten years ago, when my father purchased it, it did not fetch \$300 a year. Now, it's worth a cool \$1,000."

"Humph ! Of whom did your respected father purchase this little property, sir, may I ask ? I thought it once belonged to Mr. Miller?"

"I fancy it did once ; but there was some flaw or other in the title deeds, and it fell into the hands of some Dutchman, and I believe my father purchased it at a low rate from him—for the fellow was poor and ignorant ; but I never bother my head about these matters. What have you done old fellow towards raising the wind ; you know there will be plenty of money by and by to make all fair and square again."

"I have done little as yet," replied the lawyer. "You see, Mr. Charles, your respected father may live a long time yet, and it is difficult just now to raise money ; but call on Monday, young sir, and I will see what I can do ; yes, I will see what I can do."

Charles Mordant left the office, inwardly cursing the plodding notions of the crusty old lawyer, still believing that when he called again something satisfactory would be effected ; "For," said he to himself, "I see plainly enough the old codger

only wants me to come out with better offers to himself for the share he may take in the matter."

No sooner, however, had the young man reached the street, than the lawyer, who had sat for some moments engrossed in thought, started up, and exclaimed, "A pretty piece of information you have let me into the secret of, Master Charles. Procure money for you, indeed. No, by my faith; but I'll make the old man plank down handsomely to me, or else, by God, I'll spring a mine beneath his feet that he little dreams of."

Charles Mordant, on quitting the office of the lawyer, proceeded to his father's counting-house to arrange some business with the old man. Mrs. Miller happened to be there, and Charles saw her for the first time since her daughter's disappearance. She held out her hand to him as he entered, and his attention was immediately arrested by a ring she wore on the third finger.

He let her hand fall from his grasp, and shuddered perceptibly. Both the widow and his father inquired if he felt unwell.

"No," said he; "it was merely a momentary qualm. I have been subject to such attacks of late." And he seated himself, until the widow was about to leave, when, to the astonishment of his father, and, indeed, of the widow herself, he offered to escort her home. She declined, but he insisted, and they left the counting-house together.

"Mrs. Miller," said he, in the course of conversation, "may I ask where you obtained that ring with the remarkable stone in the centre? I never saw but one resembling it before, and then it was on the finger of an intimate friend. Excuse me for the seeming rudeness of the question, but the ring attracted my notice the moment I saw it."

"Alas!" replied the widow, "I fear that the ring is the only memento of the kind I have left of my poor, unfortunate Jane."

"Pardon me for recalling such painful recollections," said the young man. "Had I known the circumstances, I would not have asked the question."

He left the widow on board the Jersey ferry-boat, and walked towards the family residence.

"Good Heavens!" said he, half aloud, after he had walked for some minutes, deeply absorbed in thought; "can it be possible that there are two rings of such very peculiar appearance?"

It may be, nay, it must be, the case. I am a fool to trouble myself about the matter."

CHAPTER VIII.

Which introduces the reader to Zuleika's abode on the Island of Annabon—Interview between Captain Seymour, King Kettle, and the Loango chiefs—The *Yunga Jagos* woman and her children—The infants cast to the lions in the canebreak.

IN the preceding chapter we left Henry Davis in the presence of the beautiful original of the portrait that had so fascinated his gaze in the cabin, on the occasion of his taking up the locket from off the sofa.

"What a charming present! How handsome it is! How like my husband! It was what I wished to possess when I last parted from him. How kind of him to think of me when he is so far, oh, so very far away," exclaimed the lady, in Spanish, as she gazed with admiration upon the beautifully executed miniature.

Harry did not understand her (although he had, through hearing some of the sailors who spoke Spanish, occasionally talking to each other in that language, become sufficiently familiar with several expressions to gather the meaning of her words, especially when coupled with the animated expression of her features), had he really heard her speak; but a fit of abstraction, such as he had experienced in the cabin on the occasion above alluded to, had again seized the boy, and he stood still as a statue, gazing earnestly upon the young girl, who, although she called Captain Seymour her husband, could not have numbered more than sixteen summers. On her part, the lady was so occupied with the picture that she seemed to have forgotten the presence of the youth; both were completely occupied with their own thoughts, when Captain Seymour, having completed his search in the carpet bag, re-entered the apartment, bearing several other costly trinkets in his hands.

He stood for some moments, looking at the boy and at the young female, and then he gave way to a peal of laughter, which rung merrily through the room.

"Oh Harry, Harry," said he at last, "I see you are not inclined to take my warning. I shall positively become jealous. Why, I declare the boy is blushing like a girl," he continued,

as Harry, recalled to himself by the captain's voice, reddened through his clear olive skin to the color of crimson. "But I need not be jealous of thee, *mi tesora*," added he, seating himself on the sofa beside the girl, and fondly placing his arm around her waist, and addressing her in words of endearment, as he placed gift after gift in her lap.

"You can go and amuse yourself in the garden, Harry," he said to the boy, who left the room, still moving as if mechanically, scarcely seeming to know what he was doing.

"What a handsome boy," said the young girl, after Harry had gone out and closed the door.

"Yes, the boy is good looking enough—pretty enough for a girl, Zuleika."

"And you will remain a long time with me? It is so long since I have seen you, *caro mio*," murmured the girl, after some conversation had passed between her and Seymour.

"Nay, dearest, not long—willingly would I stay with you altogether; but I cannot. I hope the day will come when we shall reside constantly together; two or three more voyages, and then I shall quit the sea, and nothing but death shall separate us."

The countenance of the young female assumed a melancholy aspect, as she replied—

"Oh, I am very sad, dear George, when you are absent from me, and so long absent. I have nobody here to speak to—nobody but the negroes; they are kind; I love them; but I cannot be happy when you are away from me."

"And yet this is a pretty spot, and you have your guitar and your books, and everything to make you happy, Zuleika?"

"Everything but you, dearest; and were you here always, I could well sacrifice all the rest."

There was such a tone of gentleness and sadness in the young girl's voice, such an expression of childlike, trustful, and confiding love in her large, soft, dark eyes, as she gazed up in the captain's face, and nestled close to him, as though she feared that he would even now slip away from her, or as if she could still scarcely realize the happiness that his visit had brought to her heart, that it was no wonder that Captain Seymour caught her in his arms and covered her with caresses, and gazed upon her with a look of fondness—such as a father would bestow upon a child, mingled with the intense affection of a husband—a lover still.

"Oh, he will soon learn, and no doubt you will get along very well together," answered the captain, laughing. Harry is a good and trusty lad, and admires you exceedingly, and I have no doubt will learn either Spanish or Greek from your lips. I know it would not take me long to learn the latter, if you were my teacher, though now I have forgotten what little I once knew."

Thus matters were planned. Captain Seymour was glad that he had thought of something to relieve in some measure, the monotony of Zuleika's life, and the next day he told Harry of the arrangement.

The lad seemed pleased with the idea, though he hardly expressed any satisfaction beyond a mere acquiescence in the arrangement.

Captain Seymour remained a week on the island ; his boat's crew enjoying themselves and making the most of the holiday, for it was little they saw of their captain, whose whole time was engrossed by Zuleika ; but, at the expiration of that period, the pinnace was got ready to return to the coast, and the captain bade Zuleika a tender, although brief, farewell, reiterating his promise to return in a month or six weeks at the farthest ; and leaving Harry, according to arrangement, to bear the young girl company until his return.

A few days after this, we again find Captain Seymour on board the Albatross in Majumba Bay. During his brief absence every preparation had been made for the reception of the slaves—the coopers had been employed in forming the bundles of shakings into water-casks, and a portion of the crew were still engaged in filling the new casks with water, a task of no slight difficulty, since the boats had to toil several miles up the river before the water could be procured sufficiently fresh and pure. Other gangs of sailors, assisted by natives, were busied taking in stores of Indian corn, plantains, and sweet potatoes ; in fact, everybody was as busy as possible. As yet, but a small portion of the expected slaves had arrived, and these had been so hardly driven from the *depot* at Quaddah, that it was found impossible to take them on board until they had been allowed some days to recruit their exhausted strength, to anoint and bathe their blistered feet and skins, and to heal the sores made by the lashes of the slave-drivers. They were of all ages and both sexes ; but, altogether, such a sorry-looking set, that Captain Seymour remonstrated sharply with King Kettle, assuring him that if the remaining portion were not in

better condition, he should refuse to take them on board. He resolved to go himself to Quaddah, and ascertain the number and condition of the slaves said to be in readiness for him; but, previously, he made a selection amongst those who had arrived, of such as he deemed capable of making the voyage, resolving to leave the remainder (ineligibles) on King Kettle's hands. There were about a hundred in all, and of these at least one-third were aged persons, whom the captain at once and firmly rejected, despite the remonstrances of the chiefs, who said that they had been at great expense in procuring them as they were, and that they would be useless to them, as they were only fit to "eat rice and plantain—very mooch—and to sleep."

"And what matters that to me?" asked the captain. "Do you suppose I want a parcel of useless cattle, only fit as you say yourself to 'eat rice very much,' No, no, Kettle—and you too, Gumbo;" addressing the chief next in rank, "I must have a better set than those, or else I shall weigh anchor and be off to Cabenda—and see what King Jacko has got to dispose of."

"King Jacko—very much bad man, cheat too much—no makee good bargain—never mind, *es todos*," replied King Kettle.

"Very well, then, see that you don't cheat me. I shall start for Quaddah to-morrow; meanwhile, see if you can't bring this lot round a little; allow them exercise—give them plenty of rice, and let them bathe every day—by that means they may be rendered worth something. You must give the children to some of your own women to nurse till the mothers get strong—as to the batch of old ones there, you must dispose of them as you best can. I shall have nothing to do with them. We shall have to throw quite enough overboard before we get to Cuba, under any circumstances; the Albatross can't be burdened with such a lot of superannuated carrion."

"*Tambien. Entiendo*" replied King Kettle, who saw that it was useless to remonstrate.

The pinnace was again got in readiness, this time to ascend the river, and taking Mr. Tolcroft and a dozen men with him, the captain took his departure on the following morning. The land on the coast from Loando to Majumba, although very fertile, is flat and swampy—the river, one of the branches of the Zaire, running for several miles through a similarly flat, but tolerably well cultivated country. At intervals there were groups of the wine palm tree and the lofty boabid, and groves

of limes, papaws and plantains ; but the land is mainly occupied with fields of Indian corn, beans, cabbages, and manioc—amongst which are scattered, at distant intervals, native huts grouped two or three together within the customary corn fence, reaching about ten feet high and keeping the occupants sheltered from the sun ; while the uncultivated parts, which, in the most fertile districts are covered with tall rank grass, afford shelter, to a variety of wild beasts—amongst which there are numerous lions, and to myriads of poisonous reptiles. There was nothing, therefore, to obstruct the view of the bay for several miles above the mouth of the river.

The river is of tolerable width, but is so overspread with rank weeds and trunks of fallen trees that the progress of a boat is necessarily slow, and though the wind blew fresh from off the sea, and all sail was set on the pinnace, the men had enough to do with their oars and poles and boat-hooks, to keep the course clear of the numerous obstacles. In some places, even where the river was more than forty feet in width between the banks, the rank herbage had grown out, partially buoyed up by the water, to a distance of ten or fifteen feet on either side, scarcely leaving space for the boat to pass between it, and occasionally its progress was facilitated by tugging it along by the branches.

At length they came to a sharp bend, with low marshy banks, the marsh extending almost to the sea-shore, and giving them an uninterrupted view of the town and coast, for although they had sailed and tugged several miles, the river was so tortuous and winding, and the bend so abrupt and inclining to seaward, that they were still but a short distance, comparatively, from the shore. Mr. Tolcroft was at the helm and Captain Seymour was standing in the stern sheets looking towards the coast and occasionally raising his spy-glass to his eye and scanning his ship as she lay at anchor in the bay.

“Hallo ! what the mischief’s up now?” exclaimed he, lowering his glass and addressing the mate. “Give me the helm, and take the glass, Mr. Tolcroft ; they surely can’t be putting the slaves on board already. Mr. Allan would never dare to disobey my orders, and yet it appears to me that those three canoes are full of black figures.”

The mate, thus addressed, gave the helm to his commander, and giving his everlasting quid a roll between his teeth and his cheek, he raised the glass to his eye and peered long and earnestly in the direction of the bay.

“What do you make of it ?” asked the captain.

The mate lowered his glass, and chuckled in an under-tone, as though he were laughing internally—the nearest approach to merriment he ever showed.

"I guess Cap'n Seymour as King Kettle is *expending* the old 'uns," said he. "Yes, by gum! there go the woolly heads—one, two, three, four on 'em overboard from the foremost canoe—and there goes a batch from the second one. They eat very mooch rice," he added, "and so old Kettle thinks it just as well the sharks should eat them afore they breeds a famine," and again he gave vent to the peculiar chuckle until his frame appeared to shake with suppressed merriment. "He's a 'tarnal old cuss, that Kettle, surely," he exclaimed, as he handed the spy-glass back to the captain, and again took the helm.

The captain raised the glass again.

"It is so, I declare," said he; "well, poor devils! It can't be helped—they'd come to that at last, and the sooner, perhaps the better for themselves. By Jove! I believe the whole twenty-five are overboard now, and he must have tied stones to their legs, for they have all sunk—no, there are two black specks striking out for the land, and the canoe is turned in chase of them; they must have got clear of the weights attached to them. What will Kettle do now, I wonder?" He kept the glass to his eye a minute longer, and then added—"By Heaven! the old scamp is beating out their brains with the paddles—Faugh!" and with a slight shudder, he lowered the glass and turned away his head.

"Sich things can't be avided in our business," said Tolcroft, coolly; "for my part, I'm used to sich sights now, and thinks nothin' on 'em."

"Ugh!" exclaimed the captain, "I think nothing of blowing out a man's brains when my blood is up, or in a fair fight; but I can't abide such sights as these."

"You were allers too soft about them 'ere matters, Cap'n," responded Tolcroft. "Lor bless you, I thinks nothin' on it now—no more does most as has followed the trade for any length of time. I sailed one v'yage with Cap'n Junot; and tho' I can't say much for the Frenchman's seamanship, or for the discipline of his craft, I must give him the credit to say, that he took them 'ere indispensable matters as coolly as possible. It was quite a credit to his *filosophy*; for arter all, them niggers bean't o' the same flesh and blood as other humans; and I doubt, for the matter o' that, if they be of the same account, humanly speaking, as a good dog—more 'spe-

cially a Newfunlan', or any o' them larger and more val'able breeds."

The captain did not reply to the philosophical argument of his mate; he had probably not listened to it, or had forgotten all about the subject, for he had seated himself in the stern sheets, and was deeply absorbed in thought. It took the pin-nace, with the utmost exertion on the part of the crew, nearly a week to reach the town of Quaddah, which was a collection of several hundred negro huts, and contained perhaps six or seven thousand inhabitants. It was in fact larger than Loando, the sea-board capital of the country, and was a place of considerable traffic with the natives of the interior, in consequence of its being the chief depot of the slaves that were shipped to the Loango coast. The town contained, besides the huts already mentioned, several long low huts of large dimensions, which were appropriated to the free use of stranger merchants, who brought down from the interior batches of slaves to dispose of to King Kettle and his agents—and the slave depot was an immense hut of similar construction, surrounded with a strong reed fence, over which gigantic negroes were posted as guards to prevent the escape of the slaves, which, however, was scarcely possible, since all but the children, or very aged persons, were manacled with tough green withes, which in some instances were tied so tight as to cut deep into the flesh of the unhappy captives; besides, they did not betray any signs of thinking of escape; they seemed to have given themselves up to hopeless despair. Slaves to the number of two hundred were here collected, and the *mafooka*, or governor of the town, said that several hundred more were on their way from the interior. Those collected, although less worn out with fatigue than the division which had been driven by forced marches to Majumba, were of much the same class. They were all entirely naked, and of all ages and both sexes. They were divided into gangs, the owners of each gang having charge over their own property, which, on the arrival of Captain Seymour, they brought out of the block-house and paraded for sale. The countenances of each and all wore an expression of stolid indifference, varied with regard to some by an expression of surprise at the novelty of their situation. They all bore, more or less, the marks of ill-usage, their flesh being covered with blue wales raised by the lash, which was carried in the hands of the slave-dealers, and applied, as it seemed, for mere amusement, or from the force of habit, and always in a

knowing style, when it was necessary to show off the paces, or to give proof of the activity of a particular slave, who had attracted the notice of a dealer.

One only amongst all the assembled group showed traces of emotion; she was weeping bitterly, but silently, and had crouched into a corner of one of the block houses with the object, apparently, of escaping notice, and of indulging in her grief.

"What's that young woman sitting weeping there in the corner?" said Captain Seymour, addressing the slave dealer, through the medium of the *Mafooka*, who spoke a little Spanish.

The reply was the sharp application of the whip to the naked body of the young woman, the pain causing her to spring to her feet, shrinking with anguish.

"What is the matter with her? She is a handsome negress as ever I clapped eyes upon," said the captain, repeating his question.

"By gum! she's a spry looking lass," added Mr. Tolcroft.

"She has lost her children, the slave dealer tells me," replied the *Mafooka*. "She come a long way from the interior, and had twin children at the breast when Yoorga purchased her. He gave a good price for her to the chief of her tribe, whose wife she was, and he was obliged to take the children, too, though they were too young to be of any use to him. The chief would not have sold her, only his principal wife was jealous of her charms. You see, senor Capitano, she is a handsome girl, and her price was two muskets and a keg of rum, besides several hands of tobacco."

"And where are her children?" asked Seymour, in Spanish.

"Senor Capitano demands to know where are the children of the *bemba*?" exclaimed the *Mafooka* to the slave dealer, who was a great burly negro of the *Yunga Jagos* tribe, and who was armed with a heavy thong of plaited buffalo hide.

"Gone for food to the lions," replied the negro, playfully flourishing his whip over the shrinking form of the female as he spoke. He then entered into a long explanation with the *Mafooka*—which the latter subsequently interpreted to the captain, from which it appeared that the woman had travelled nearly a moon's journey, and had carried her children nearly the whole way. She had caused the slave dealer a great deal of trouble, as her progress had necessarily been impeded by the children, and sometimes a vigorous application of the whip had been necessary—that it had been fully applied, the poor creature's

back and arms and legs plainly testified, for they were scarified with sores, some of them still bleeding. "But, she would have died if the children had been taken from her," continued the negro. "At length, passing through a cane-brake—a few days journey from Quaddah—two lions had suddenly rushed from the the canes and stood glaring their fiery eyeballs at the cavalcade ; the negroes in charge succeeded in frightening off the animals, and they fled to the cane-brake, but the woman and her children were in the rear, and as they were emerging from the brake, I observed one of the fierce brutes creeping along, apparently for the purpose of making a spring at the mother and her infants.

"I fired my musket at the beast," added the negro, "and though he was not hit, the lion skulked into the cane-brake, and then I was angry with the woman and urged her forward to join the rest of the gang ; the children encumbered her. I had had trouble enough with them. I struck her with the whip, and tore the infants from her—throwing them into the path beside the cane-brake—and then dragged the mother to the rest of the gang. She is weeping for her children—it is not uncommon—that's all."

Captain Seymour made arrangements for the purchase and transportation to Majumba, of one hundred slaves, including among them the Yunga Jagos woman, and then returned to the coast. The cargo arrived a few days after he had reached the port, and the fresh arrivals were placed with those previously picked out from the lot that King Kettle had brought down, until the day of the departure—it being desirable that they should remain ashore as long as possible, so as to be in pretty good condition when shipped.

All promising to be in readiness in a fortnight, Captain Seymour prepared to pay his promised second visit to the Island of Annabon, and to the fair recluse of that beautiful Island, the lovely Zuleika. As, however, he was on the point of setting out, a vessel was seen in the offing, which the captain soon recognized as the Dolphin, Captain Junot. As she drew nearer, it was perceptible that she had met with severe usage some way or other, for her top-gallant masts had been carried away, and her progress was so impeded for want of sail, that she stood very slowly into the bay. The pinnacle was just under sail when the Dolphin was espied, and Captain Seymour resolved to go on board of her and learn what ill luck had befallen her.

CHAPTER IX.

The Birth and Parentage of Seymour—His first meeting with Zuleika in the Slave Market at Constantinople—He resolves to Educate and then to Marry the Greek Girl—The Deception of Antorine Dichet and the Consequences thereof—Seymour engages in the Slave Trade—Marries Zuleika and finds her a secluded Home on the Island of Annabon.

WE will, in the present chapter, retrace our steps, going back indeed to a period anterior to the date of the commencement of our story.

Captain Seymour, at the period that he was first introduced to the reader, was a young man of about six or seven and twenty years of age. We now propose to give a brief history of his life, since such is necessary for the better comprehension of our narrative. He was a native of one of the Southern States—Virginia, we believe—but from his early childhood until he had passed his twentieth year, his life had been spent in Europe. His father was an Englishman, who had left his native land while still a mere child, the grandfather of Seymour having emigrated to the United States ; not urged thereto by poverty, or the hope of bettering his condition by directing his energies in a field less stocked with laborers, as is generally the case with emigrants, for he was a man of great wealth, and one who boasted his descent from a noble English family, being no other than that of Seymour, whose head was the well-known first proud Duke of Somerset.

Hot-brained and headstrong ; a man of desperate and unbridled passions, to the indulgence of which his great wealth allowed free scope, he had entered the army at an early period of life—as affording a fair field for the dashing, daring energy of his character. There he had rapidly risen to the rank of Colonel ; when, satisfied with active service, at the age of thirty-five, he had married a young lady every way his equal in birth and fortune, who bore him one son, the father of our present hero. The poor lady was, however, sadly neglected by her dissolute husband, and she died soon after she had given birth to her son ; it was rumored at the time that she died heart-broken, in consequence of her husband's cruelty and neglect and her knowledge of his flagrant infidelity. He pursued his course of extra-

vagance and dissipation unchecked, until his fortieth year, when he was detected in a scandalous intrigue with the handsome wife of a former brother officer. The consequence was that he received a challenge from the outraged husband, who fell mortally wounded at the first shot from his vile antagonist. There were rumors at the time that foul play had taken place, and that the ball had been abstracted from the pistol of the Colonel's antagonist, he having bribed the officer's second, who was a creature of his own. The truth was never known; nor is it a pleasant task to pry into such histories as these; suffice it to say, that through the power of his own wealth and the influence of his wealthy connections, the affair was hushed up, on the condition, exacted on the part of his relatives, that he should expatriate himself, and that all future relationship should on their part be disowned.

This was a matter of little consequence to Colonel Seymour, who cared little for family ties, so long as he had unbounded wealth at his command to enable him to continue—he cared not where—the career of dissipation that had become habitual to him. He converted his wealth into cash, and with the partner of his guilt, the widow of the murdered officer, he came to America. Here he pursued a similar course of life for several years, but he died prematurely old, shortly after his guilty partner, leaving his son Alfred, the father of our hero, full and perfect possession of his immense wealth; although his extravagance and his improvidence and neglect to a still greater degree had sadly impaired it.

Brought up under such instructors, it was no wonder that the son had inherited the bad passions, and been trained to the indulgence of the same evil propensities, as had marked his father. He, however, partially retrieved his character, by falling in love with a beautiful and well-born French lady, who had come out from Paris to reside with her guardian in Louisiana, and, after a brief courtship, he married her, and soon after the birth of his son George—he, at his wife's request, went to reside permanently in the city of Paris.

There our hero was educated; and from his earliest youth, he displayed an aptitude for study that promised one day to enable him to obtain a position of eminence; for wealth to help him on, step by step, he apparently already possessed. He possessed many of the unprincipled traits of his father's character; but these were so softened down and kept in subjection by his mother, and her gentle attributes were seemingly so

blended in his disposition, that his more impetuous passions only served to give a dashing, lively semblance to his disposition—befitting a youth of good expectations, and of an exterior of remarkable beauty and elegance. His father died when he was a mere child, leaving his son the sole heir to his property on the death of his mother; subjected only, should she die while he was still a minor, to the guardianship of such executors as he should appoint. Madame Seymour was a woman of very delicate frame, and her death occurred about three years after the decease of her husband, when George was about fourteen years of age. She bequeathed her only beloved child to the care of a lawyer in whom she had unbounded confidence, and who, since her husband's death, had managed her affairs.

George, at the period of this occurrence, was at school at Dijon, where he had given promise already of great scholastic attainments. He was deeply grieved at the death of his mother, to whom he was tenderly attached. He returned to Paris to attend the funeral, and to submit himself to the regulations of his guardian, Monsieur Dichet. He had always had an ample allowance from his mother, and Monsieur Dichet, after the funeral had taken place, told him that he intended to increase it considerably; that his mother had left him the heir of great wealth, and that it was but right that he should enjoy it while he was young. He also took every means to lead the impulsive lad into every sort of temptation; for, notwithstanding the good opinion Madame Seymour had entertained of him, he was a man utterly devoid of principle, and the last person she would have chosen, had she known his real character, to be the guide and guardian of her beloved and orphaned child. M. Dichet had his own ends to serve. We shall see how he carried out his plans.

George, eventually, after having been permitted to run loose amidst all the profligacy of the most profligate capital in the world, at an age when he most required the care of a vigilant preceptor and adviser, went back to school; but he was no longer the careful, indefatigable student he had hitherto been. He could not put up with the restraints of scholastic discipline; and now, having an abundance of money at his disposal, he was able to purchase over plenty of so-called friends, willing to encourage him in setting his tutors at defiance, and, indeed, in undermining the principles of his fellow-students. Still, at times, the recollections of his mother would recall him to his senses, and, perhaps for weeks, he would devote himself to

study with as great an intensity as ever ; but, by-and-by, all would be forgotten again, and he would break out into greater dissipations than before, until, at length, although on account of his evident talents and his wealth, his preceptors looked upon his failings with much greater leniency than they would have done upon those of his fellows.

At last, his conduct became so outrageous—so devoid of all decency—that he was formally expelled from the college. He wrote to his guardian, saying that he should not return to Paris, for he intended to travel, and he desired a still greater augmentation of his allowance. This was readily granted, and his conduct even approved of by his rascally guardian, who wrote that it could not be expected that a young man of such splendid expectations should confine himself to the rigorous regulations of a college ; and he promised to supply him with what funds he required. In company, therefore, with one of the tutors of the college—a man of depraved mind—who had watched (knowing his wealth) the reckless career of the young man, and who had gained a considerable ascendancy over him, although, even at this early age (he was but fifteen, although tall and manly enough in appearance to pass for eighteen or twenty) George Seymour would submit himself to no person's guidance, he started upon a tour through Germany, which was subsequently extended into Turkey and Asia Minor.

Had it not been for the companionship of the worthless tutor, George might still have been saved, but he urged him on to every extravagance, and ridiculed anything like a return to the path of rectitude.

The very spirit of adventure, which the youth possessed, and which is always allied to a certain nobility of soul, might, we repeat, have otherwise led him to take delight in more ennobling pursuits than those he followed under the direction of his vile companion.

Thus two years passed away, George, during that period, having visited almost every capital in Germany and Austria, and having penetrated into Turkey after first crossing the Black Sea from Odessa to Trebizond; in Asia Minor, he resolved to return to Paris by way of Constantinople and the the Mediterranean Sea. While at Constantinople curiosity prompted him to visit the slave market, although the common impression that there are there to be seen exposed to vulgar gaze the beauties of Georgia, Circassia, or the Isles of Greece is erroneous, these being only shown to Turks of rank and

fortune, who, it is expected, have a desire to purchase them for their own harems, or perchance, for the purpose of making an acceptable gift to some superior. The majority of the slaves exposed openly in the market are negroes and mulattoes of various shades, and the sight in reality offers little novelty to any one who has witnessed the sale of negroes at New Orleans, or any other Southern slave mart.

Whilst, however, George Seymour and his travelling companion were strolling through the streets, the attention of the former was arrested by the sight of a beautiful child of seven or eight years of age, who was being led up and down the slave market by a female of prepossessing appearance, but whose features were marked by a ferocity of expression that showed her to be the slave of the most unbridled passions. She was attired, as well as the child, in the dress of the females of the Grecian Archipelago; and evidently, from the anxious glances she cast at those who noticed the beauty of the child, she sought a purchaser for her.

"Good God!" exclaimed George Seymour to his companion, "can it be possible that infant is for sale!"

"No doubt of it," answered the *ci-devant* usher, whose name was Jollette; "both the Greeks and the Circassians sell their children; but this little creature is rather young—that is the reason she is publicly exposed. Were she older you would not get the chance of seeing her, unless you were favored by getting the *entree* into the bagnios where the slaves destined for the harems of the grand seigneurs are kept, secluded from the curiosity of the vulgar. *Pardieu!* Monsieur George, it is as difficult to get a glimpse of one of these veiled beauties before they become inmates of the harem, as it is afterwards."

"She is a lovely little creature," exclaimed George, whose attention was so earnestly fixed upon the child that he had paid little heed to what his companion had said.

"Yes, she is pretty enough—*mais tres petite*—a mere child."

"And the most beautiful child I have ever seen," responded George. "See what hair—thick, soft, and long, and glossy as silk. It shines in the sun like threads of gold—and what eyes, and eyebrows, and eyelashes!"

"And what a smooth forehead, and what a straight Grecian nose, and what a round, finely moulded chin, and fair, pure complexion," said M. Jollette, laughing. "You see, George, I can admire the points of female beauty as well as you; but, *ma foi!* it is so much admiration thrown away upon one so

young. *Parbleu!* If you could only get admission into yonder bagnio now—or were this damsel eighteen instead of eight years of age, it would be another matter”—

While this conversation had been going on, the object of the youth's admiration had been gazing about her with an expression of bewildered delight at the novelty of her situation, apparently quite unconcerned—probably ignorant of the fate to which she was evidently destined.

The female who had her in charge, however, had noticed the admiration that shone in the ardent gaze of the younger of the Frank strangers, and she addressed him in a Greek patois, which, with the knowledge of the Greek language he had acquired at school, and which was still fresh in his memory, aided by the practice he had had in the various dialects during the last six months of his travels, young Seymour could, with some little difficulty, manage to comprehend.

“Would the Frank milord buy the child?” she asked.

“What does the woman say, George?” inquired M. Jollette, whose attention had been elsewhere directed, but who had heard the woman's voice.

“As well as I can make out, she asks if I will buy the child,” replied George.

Ha, ha, ha!” laughed M. Jollette. “*Mon dieu! c'est drole ca!* A precious bargain you would have, my friend. If, as I said, the girl were eighteen, now, there would be some sense in it; but, *Parbleu!* even then, you could not carry her to Paris.”

Not heeding the badinage of his companion, George had entered into a broken conversation with the woman.

“Is the child your own?” he asked.

“Mine to sell, monsieur,” replied the woman.

“But is she your daughter—your own child?”

The woman smiled, but did not reply.

“Where do you come from?”

“From Scio, *Signor*,” said the woman, altering the title she gave the querist at each reply—sometimes giving the French, sometimes the Italian, and sometimes the Spanish title of respect.

“Are you a native of that Island?”

“*Si, Senor.*”

“And the child also?”

“*Si, Excellenza.*”

“What are you talking about, George?” interposed M. Jol-

lette; "you will cause the woman to believe that you wish to purchase the child."

"And if I do?"

"Then I think you will be a great fool," replied M. Jollette.

"M. Jollette," said George, sternly, "I would thank you not to address such language to me again, or we part company. I will allow no one to address me in that manner."

"*Pardon, Monsieur George,*" replied the Frenchman; "it was a slip of the tongue; I meant no harm. You are too hasty. Have your own way."

"I mean to have it," answered George, curtly, as he proceeded again to question the woman—

"And you really wish to sell this pretty child?" he said.

"Really, *Monsieur!* have I not already told your excellency?"

"And how much do you ask for her?"

"*Monsieur?*" exclaimed the woman, apparently not comprehending the question.

"The price. How many piastres? I ask the price of the child."

"Ah, yes; *Milord* is rich, and the child is very beautiful. I demand one thousand piastres."

"Pooh, pooh!" replied George, turning away; "you ask the price of a beauty old enough to become the inmate of a harem."

The woman feared that he was about to leave, and she hastily repeated—

"The child is very beautiful. I will take eight hundred piastres."

"If I were certain that you were the mother of the infant, and had the right to dispose of her, I would purchase her," replied Seymour. "Who and what are you?" he continued, "and by what right do you dispose of her?"

"I am her mother, *Excellenza.*"

"Good God! is it possible, woman?" exclaimed Seymour. "You a mother, and sell your own child, and such a beautiful child as this!"

"I am very poor, *Senor*, and my husband compels me."

"Have you other children?" asked the young man, scarcely able to control his indignation.

"I have a son at Scio; I have another daughter."

"And she is dead?"

"I have sold her, *Excellenza*—she was very beautiful, more

beautiful than this child. She is in the seraglio of the Sultan Mahmoud." [This occurrence took place, it must be borne in mind, prior to the death of the Sultan Mahmoud, father of the present Sultan, Abd-el-Medjid.]

"I will not purchase a child from its mother," said the young man, indignantly turning away.

"As your excellency pleases," replied the woman. "The child is beautiful ; she will find a purchaser."

At this moment the little girl, who had been, apparently unconsciously, listening to this conversation, but who had been, evidently, pleased with the admiration with which Seymour regarded her, smiled innocently, and placed her hand in his. This smile, and the simple act of childish confidence, decided Seymour.

"Woman, I will buy the girl," said he ; "follow me to the caravansera, and I will give you the money." He took the hand of the child and led her through the street, heedless of the sneers of Jollette and the wondering gaze of numerous spectators.

"Would you like to come and live with me?" he asked the child, as plainly as he could, addressing her in her native patois

"You will be kind to me?" said she, inquiringly, yet still confidingly.

"Very kind. I shall love you very much. Shall you not be very sorry to leave your mother?"

"Zoe beats me," replied the child.

"But she is your mother?" inquired Seymour ; "shall you not be sorry to leave her?"

"She makes me call her Zoe, not mother. I shall like to live with you. You will be kind to me."

"Indeed I will," answered Seymour.

At this moment they arrived at the Turkish Inn, or caravansera ; and the money was paid over to the woman who had said she was the mother of the little girl, and she became the property of George Seymour. Whether or not Zoe, as the child called her, was really her mother, George never learnt. He made further inquiries after her on the following day, but she had gone, immediately after she had received the money, on board a Greek felucca, which was on the point of sailing for Scio—and he never saw her again.

It required all George's determination to control the ridicule with which Jollette would have assailed him had he dared ; but

his youthful companion had already obtained a complete mastery over him, and Jollette contented himself with laughing in his sleeve at what he considered the insane folly of his companion.

"What is your name, *ma petite*?" asked George of the child, after he had carried her into his own apartment in the caravansera.

"They call me Bedetta," was the reply.

"And I shall call you Zuleika henceforward," answered George, "you will recollect that—you are *my* Zuleika."

"Yes—it is a pretty name," said the child, gazing trustingly in her new protector's face.

"Why have you chosen that name, George?" asked Jollette.

"Because I fancy it," he replied—"because Byron's Zuleika was always a favorite heroine of mine, and because I fancy this little girl is like her."

"To-morrow we quit Constantinople for Naples," said Jollette after a pause.

"Yes, to-morrow—I have got our permits ready."

"And what do you intend to do with little Bedetta—Zuleika, I mean?"

"Take her with me."

"And then?"

"Carry her with me to France."

Jollette did not reply, but he opened his eyes very wide and shrugged his shoulders.

At length he ventured to ask—

"And your future intentions regarding her—are?"

"To have her educated, and when she is old enough to marry, to make her my wife. It is a whim I have taken into my head."

"And as foolish a whim as ever man determined upon," muttered Jollette to himself, inaudibly, "we shall see what it comes to."

On the following day, George Seymour and Jollette—the former with Zuleika, as we shall now call her, under his care—sailed for Naples, and having remained there for a few weeks, again sailed for Carthage in Spain, Seymour having resolved to make the tour of the Spanish Continent before he returned to Paris.

Finding, however, that it was difficult to travel with the child, he placed her in a convent at Grenada, for the purpose of being educated, leaving ample funds in the hands of one of the sisters

for present purposes, and promising to return within a year and renew his payment and ascertain what progress the child had made.

Thus far, all had been *couleur de rose* in Seymour's life, but now he was doomed to suffer a sad reverse of fortune. On his arrival at Madrid, he had expected to have received remittances from France, but he found none, and having expended all his available funds for the child's education, he was put to great inconvenience. He, however, wrote to Paris, and awaited a reply at Madrid. It came at last, but not in the form he had anticipated.

The letter came from his late mother's banker at Paris. It informed the young man that Monsieur Dichet had failed in business, under circumstances of a dishonorable nature, and had absconded, no one knew whither, deeply in debt, and having withdrawn from the bank, some time before his embarrassed circumstances became known, the whole of the large property he had in trust for George Seymour. The young man perused the letter with dismay. A moment before, he had imagined himself to be the possessor of immense wealth; now he was ruined, by the villainy of one in whose faith he had implicitly trusted. He was, in fact, a pauper in a strange land.

He kept his own apartment, perfectly stupefied by the contents of the letter, during the whole of that day. On the following morning he resolved to seek advice of M. Jollette. He was not to be found. Upon inquiry, he learnt that he had received a letter from Paris on the preceding day, and had immediately set out for France. George soon found that this infamous man had not only quitted him in his hour of misfortune, but had robbed him to a large amount. He had carried off with him a trunk containing all the most valuable of George's personal effects and the little cash that he still had in his possession. George was thunderstruck, stupefied, when he contemplated the perfidy of this villain; but the heaviest blow had already fallen upon the victim, and now he bore the second, which a few hours before would have almost prostrated his energies, with comparative stoicism. He soon recovered from the temporary stupefaction which the desertion of his companion had caused, and his eye lighted upon a letter on the mantel shelf of the apartment. It was directed to him; he opened and read it. It ran as follows:

"GEORGE SEYMOUR:—I have borne long enough with your

patronage—and while you were wealthy have put up with the scorn and contumely with which you have treated me. Now, I have learnt you are penniless. Think not that you have a friend in me. I used you—I, whom you despised, as a tool to suit my own purposes. You are useful to me no longer, and I have left you forever.

ANTOINE DICHET,

Known to you as Pierre Jollette."

This was sufficient to satisfy the betrayed youth that his companion, Jollette, was a relative of his late infamous guardian, and had been employed by M. Dichet for the furtherance of his own purposes. He had been amply supplied with money, in order to blind his eyes to the duplicity of his guardian and his travelling companion, and he had fallen into the snare.

George Seymour was not one to fall into the depths of despair upon learning the falsity of his supposed friends. He did not tear his hair, or rend his garments, or give himself up to sorrow; but he recorded a vow (falling into the other extreme, and thinking that because those whom he had trusted had deceived him, all men were deceitful), that his hand should thenceforth be raised against every man—that he would thenceforth have no compunction—that his own interests should be paramount to any other consideration—that neither man nor woman should thereafter stand in the way of the gratification of his will. One only reservation he made. It was in favor of the little Scio girl whom he had purchased. Her he vowed to love, protect, and cherish. She was, like himself, cast off—betrayed by her natural protector—there was common cause between them—and while he lived he resolved that she should not want—should know no sorrow—should be in the receipt of every gratification it lay in his power to bestow.

The remaining portion of George Seymour's career, until the period in which he was introduced to the reader, was quite as singular, though in a different way, to that which had preceded it.

He raised money by the sale of his watch and jewels to reach Paris. There arrived, he sought out the banker, and learnt from him the utter hopelessness of his affairs. In him, however, he found a friend. He possessed considerable literary talent, and obtained, through the banker, a situation on one of the leading journals of the capital. In a short time his articles created great sensation, and he seemed on the high road

to fame and fortune—for successful journalism is, in France, a guarantee of fame—but his notions were too republican—too democratic, to suit the court of Louis Phillippe, and the writer was discovered, fined, and imprisoned. While in jail he renewed his vows of hatred and scorn towards mankind, and upon his release, heedless of the future, he resolved to put his theory into practice. He joined a band of robbers in the passes of the Apennines, and remained with them six months, until the band was dispersed by *gendarmes*. He escaped (though several were captured), and wandered through Switzerland and Italy, living upon the booty he had saved. Arrived at Otranto, scarcely caring whither was his destination, and his funds failing, he joined a Greek vessel that was about sailing from that out of the way port, altogether heedless of her character. She proved to be a piratical craft, and in her he cruised for several months, distinguishing himself, amongst his cruel comrades, by his superior ferocity. Still, amidst all this, one humanizing influence prevailed; it was the thought of the little Zuleika whom he had left at Grenada.

Amidst all his difficulties he had managed to transmit to the superior of the convent, from time to time, sufficient for her maintenance and education, though, since he had placed her there, he had never visited her. At last the pirate's stronghold in the Greek seas was broken up, and with a considerable amount of property in his possession, which he turned into money, he sought the land of his birth, without a thought of his future career. He arrived at Charleston, and was persuaded by a sea captain, whom he fell in with, to take a trip to sea with him. The vessel proved to have been secretly fitted out as a slaver, and on board of her, nothing loth, George Seymour was initiated into the mysteries of the infamous traffic in slaves on the African coast.

On his return he was introduced to Mr. Mordant. His gentlemanly manners, and his apparently unscrupulous principles, satisfied the merchant that he was a person who would suit him, and he was forthwith installed as captain of one of his vessels, secretly engaged in conveying slaves from the coast of Africa, and disposing of them in Cuba and on the Brazilian coast.

At this period George Seymour had only just attained his twenty-first year, although his habits of life had made him seem older. On his first voyage he boldly ran into Gibraltar with false papers, and leaving his ship, brought the young girl

Zuleika from Grenada, and hired a governess as companion to accompany her. The pretty child he now found giving every promise of becoming a most beautiful woman. She was transported with delight on again beholding her protector, and he took her with him to Sierra Leone. There he made a purchase from a Portuguese merchant of a considerable lot of land in the lovely but almost unsettled island of Annabon, upon which he caused a handsome cottage to be erected, and there he placed Zuleika, still under the tuition of her governess. During five years he visited her there as often as he could, which, however, was but seldom; but he lavished freely upon her, and upon her abode, the money he gained by his nefarious profession. At the end of this period, when the girl was in her fifteenth year, the governess died, and was buried on the island, and Seymour, who was on a visit to Annabon at the time, secured the services of a Portuguese padre, and married the young and beautiful girl. Thus Zuleika became the slave captain's bride, well educated, yet ignorant, poor child, of all the conventionalities of life, and all the more loved by Seymour in consequence of this artlessness. Such was Zuleika at the period at which she was introduced to the reader.

We have given a sufficient insight into the character of Seymour to show that he was in many respects a man of heartless, unprincipled disposition; but, notwithstanding his many failings, he was ever true to his love for the innocent being whom he had taken under his protection, and whom he loved with a passionate, all-passing affection.

Well might he repeat the last line of the "*Corsair*," when Henry had concluded the reading in the cabin, and take to himself as prophetic of his future the concluding couplet:

"And dying, left a name to other times,
Linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes."

CHAPTER X.

Zuleika's bower—Harry Davis's secret is, by accident, discovered by the Greek girl.

THE Western coast of the African continent, or at least that portion of it which is situated between the tropics, has long

been notorious for the fatality of its climate to European constitutions ; yet it abounds with scenery of the most delightful and sometimes of the most romantic character ; nowhere has nature been so lavish of her gifts—nowhere has vegetation revelled so wildly in the extravagance of luxuriance : for here she knows no period of torpidity ; she knows decay, it is true—for every earthly thing, animate or inanimate, must wither and perish ; but she needs no resting space to recover her vitality ; the full-blown leaves fall off—the matured herbage perishes ; but the germ of new life has already been sown, and it almost immediately springs into maturity. Were this beautiful country cleared of its rank and superabundant vegetation, which, falling to the earth, ere yet it is entirely withered, or its moisture evaporated through the pressure and rapid growth of young and healthy shoots, loads the soil with decomposing vegetable matter, breeding malaria in its most noxious and fatal form—were the soil drained and improved by the arts of civilization, it would be, we truly believe, one of the most salubrious, as it is now one of the most enchanting portions of the globe. Poor, benighted Africa ! In all things allowed to run waste—its people debased ; its soil neglected ; its resources unknown ! its interior unexplored ; will it ever occupy the position that its situation and extent over the earth's surface, its mineral and agricultural wealth, and its commercial promise should claim for it ? Will the ban of the patriarch pronounced against its children never be removed ; or will it ever remain, as it now is, the only portion of the habitable globe into which the light of science and the spirit of adventure has not penetrated ? A mystery enshrouds the depths of its dark forests, and the unknown extent of its vast deserts. Its sombre and apparently impassable, impregnable mountain fastnesses, and the unfathomed beds of its mighty rivers—the sources of which are unknown, may contain treasures, such as the world has not hitherto dreamed of—may form a barrier to wonders, such as have never yet startled mankind. Who knows—who can surmise what may be the condition of the interior of this vast continent ? Will it always be thus ? We believe not. We think that the day will arrive when Africa, shunned and despised now, will furnish a wide and ample field for the labors of the philanthropist and the man of science, and for the enterprise and energy of the traveller and the merchant. Then, and not until then, when it is destroyed at the fountain head, will the ban of slavery be removed, and the shocking scenes it has

been, and still will be our duty to depict, be seen and heard of no more : then, and not until then, will its debased population become capable of asserting and maintaining their rights, as denizens of the earth's surface and men made after the image of the Creator, although their skins are darkened by the rays of an ardent sun, their intellect brutalized by ages of paganism, and their spirit crushed and subdued because "the hand of every man is turned against them." The islands upon the coast of Africa, and those scattered in the bights of Biafra and Benin, are as famed for their fertile soil and their magnificent scenery, as the adjacent coast ; and in some instances as dreaded for their deadly climate. This is the case with Fernando Po, St. Thomas, and the larger islands ; but the latter remark does not apply to those of smaller magnitude, the atmosphere of which is kept cool and healthful by sea breezes, which penetrate throughout their whole surface. These are lovely oases in the desert of ocean, and amongst these one of the most beautiful, most fertile, and most healthful, is the delightful island of Annabon.

We have already briefly described the abode of Zuleika. It was situated near the sea-side, and embosomed in the forest, although there were several vistas through which might be seen glimpses of lovely landscape stretching far into the perspective. Winding paths through the forest and amidst the cane-brakes led to various favorite spots of Zuleika's, where she loved to wander and repose on the soft turf, and where she had caused arbors of mango trees to be formed in which she could rest sheltered from the too ardent rays of the sun during the noonday heats. There was one spot which was an especial favorite with her, and there, one morning about three weeks after Captain Seymour had left for the coast, she and Harry Davis had wandered together.

This place was more scant of trees than most parts of the island, and the scenery around resembled more that of the temperate zones in its type, although the broad leaves of the palm and cocoa trees, and the broad-bladed herbage and wide-spreading cactuses and other prickly shrubs, still stamped it with the impress of tropical verdure. In the back-ground, right in the centre of the island, rose a range of lofty and rugged mountains, covered half-way to the summit with trees and herbage ; but the lofty peaks of which were bleak and bare, and sharply defined against the deep blue, clear, tropical sky.

The island was but small, but this range of mountains—dome upon dome, peak upon peak—heaped in very confusion as though an Atlas had stumbled with his burden and left the broken fragments of a world behind him—gave an air of vastness and grandeur to the view, and allowed free scope to the fancy to imagine a perspective of unmeasured depth; the slopes of these mountains were lost amidst the forest growth which stretched on either side around this favorite spot, and inclosed it, as it were, in an amphitheatre, through the centre of which, between slopes covered with verdure and studded with picturesque clumps of trees, coursed a wide rivulet, on which were several little islands thickly grown with long grass and reeds and shrubbery, and around which the water rapidly flowing towards the sea temporarily impeded in its course, whirled and rippled and created miniature whirlpools. A grove of cocoas and palms thickly intertwined with parasite shrubbery, rich in wild flowers of gorgeous coloring, grew along the margin of the rivulet, which here and there widened and formed miniature bays and harbors, sheltered, shaded, and darkened by the dense overhanging brushwood, and a poet's fancy might have dreamed that the wood nymphs and naiads of heathen mythology loved to sport and play amidst the cool waters, or to rest beneath the cover of the foliage. Groups of goats and antelopes which Seymour had caused to be brought from the southern coast, bounded over the flowery turf, or leaped amongst the rocks and clambered the hillocks which rose around in picturesque confusion, fearless of the attack of the wild beasts of the forest, for these, though numerous on the coast, are unknown to the islands, where the largest and wildest inhabitant of the jungle is the monkey or the squirrel. They had grown to know Zuleika, and would come bounding toward her at her call, and feed from her hands, allowing her to pat and stroke their soft, glossy coats. The rivulet broke into a miniature waterfall just above the spot on which Zuleika had caused an arbor, covered with flowering acacias, to be constructed, and a few yards beneath this, many hued fishes basked and played in the sunshine, or darted to and fro in the clear water, their every rapid motion marked by a streak of silvery lightning flashing into the eyes of the beholder.

In this arbor, about three weeks (as we have said) after Captain Seymour had returned to the coast, Zuleika and Harry were seated, alternately conversing together, or reading the books that were strewn about, and which had been brought

from the cottage by Zuleika's negro attendant, or gazing upon the falling water sparkling in the sunbeams, and displaying all the colors of the prism, and watching the fishes as they darted to and fro, catching the crumbs of bread thrown them by the youth and maiden.

Harry could speak, as we have said, a few words of Spanish, and could understand much more, when he first arrived at Annabón; but it was astonishing with what rapidity he had progressed during the short period he had been there. He now found no difficulty in conversing with Zuleika—in broken language, it is true, but such as she could readily understand; and though she often smiled archly and good-naturedly at his blunders and his utter defiance of the rules of grammar, she sought to adapt her language to his comprehension; and thus they got along very well together, as Captain Seymour had said they would when he left them.

"And is America, then, as beautiful as this land? Are there such sweet scenes there as this upon which we are now gazing?" asked Zuleika, in reply to some remark made by her companion.

"America is a vast continent," replied Harry; "and there is a great variety of scenery. In the southern parts, though I have never been there, it may much resemble this; but, though more rugged, even where I have been, the country is in summer very beautiful."

"Seymour has told me of cold, and snow which falls in winter, and I have read of it in books; it must be strange. I should like to see it;" and the young girl sunk into a temporary reverie, her large eyes fixed on vacancy, as though the scene she wished to visit floated before her mental vision.

Harry sat gazing with a strange admixture of feelings upon her extraordinary beauty; at length he gave vent to a long drawn sigh, which aroused the attention of his companion.

"You sigh—you are unhappy?" she said, inquiringly. "Why is it so? I would see every one happy. Yet I often notice that you are thoughtful and spiritless. Why is it so?"

"Are you always happy, Zuleika?" asked Harry, evading the question, and, Yankee fashion, substituting another.

"No, not always. I often feel discontented at the thought of being confined to this small island, or rather to the cultivated portion of it; for, small as it is, the interior neither I nor any of my negroes have seen. And yet I *should* be happy;

Seymour loves me and does every thing in his power to make me happy."

"And you love him?"

"Love him! How can I do otherwise? He is all in all to me—the only protector, father, brother, lover, I have ever known; and he is my husband. Love him! yes, dearer than I love my own life. Some day he will take me hence, or come here and live with me always; he says so, and Seymour never told me a falsehood—and then—yes then—I shall not want to leave this island. Is not George handsome?" she added; "I have seen many men whom he has brought here, and sometimes I have seen Portuguese traders here; but none, oh, none of them can compare with him."

"You were not born here?" asked Harry, his long pent-up curiosity respecting Zuleika getting the better of his delicacy, of introducing questions regarding a matter she had never dwelt upon.

"Oh, no," and the girl laughed merrily. "No, Senor Harry, I was not born here—but I was a child when George brought me here in his vessel. I recollect little of the world but this island, and a convent in Granada—and sometimes I have an indistinct recollection of something else, but what I cannot say. It is of an island—not this, but like this—and a seashore such as we now see in the distance, in the rippling waters of which the rays of the sun shone reflected as they do now upon yonder sea—and of little playmates, and a woman who was perhaps my mother; but all is seen as through a mist in my childhood's recollection. Harry, have you a mother? My mother I never knew. George always evades the subject, and speaks to himself in English, when I turn the conversation towards that point."

A tear glistened in the eyes of the boy, as he replied:

"Yes, Zuleika, I have a mother who loves me dearly."

"And a father, and a brother and sister?" asked Zuleika.

"My father is dead, but I have a brother in America—perhaps now, though, he is upon the sea; he is to be a sailor. I have no sister."

"I wish I had a brother and sister—at least a sister. George is my brother and my husband too; but there are so many reasons why I should like a sister. You are not married—you have no wife?" she asked, suddenly breaking off in her abrupt way.

"I have no wife," replied Harry, smiling; "why do you ask? I am too young to marry."

"Oh! not too young to love," replied the girl; "I have loved Seymour as long as I can recollect. I could not live without his love—but then *you* have a brother to love, and I never had brother or sister."

She remained silent and thoughtful for several minutes, carelessly stroking the neck of a favorite fawn, which followed her from amongst a group of antelopes like a dog. At length she said:

"Harry, tell me your history. You are not like other sailor lads I have seen; they are coarse and rough—you are gentle and kind—just as I should like my brother to be if heaven had given me one. You shall be my brother," she added, smiling in his face, and taking his hand in her own. "Tell your sister your history, Harry."

"It is a mournful relation; perhaps some day I will tell it you. You ask me, Zuleika, if I have ever loved? Yes; truly, fondly, trustingly. I set my heart upon an idol, as you have done upon Seymour, and found my idol dashed to the ground, when I had forsaken all else to devote myself to its worship. Nay more—I found that the image I had set up before me as pure gold was but base clay. I was doubly deceived; all my hopes blasted; myself—never mind—perhaps some day I will tell you all—but—not now." He ceased speaking, and with difficulty suppressed his emotion.

"Poor Harry—how I pity you," replied the girl, a tear glittering in her large dark eyes. "It must be dreadful to love and not be loved again. If Seymour did not love me, I should pray daily, hourly, for death. If he were aught else than he is—so good, so gentle, so kind, so handsome, so devotedly attached to me—I should *love* him still, with all my soul—that I could not help; but I should pine away and die with grief. Oh! the thought is too terrible—no wonder you are unhappy, Harry,"—and again she pressed his hand—"but I will be your sister, and I will ask George to let you stay with me always. He will do so;—he will refuse me nothing, he loves me so dearly."

Harry returned the pressure. "Poor girl!" he said, mentally, "may your idol never be shattered—may he be always to *you* what he is now; but—I fear the future."

The conversation had conjured up melancholy thoughts in the minds of both, and they sat silently upon the mossy bank of the

arbor until the lengthening shadows warned them that the brief twilight of a tropical sunset was approaching.

Zuleika was the first to speak.

"Let us go home, Harry," she said. "It will soon grow dark. We will each learn our tasks—you, your Spanish ; I, my English lesson—and then you shall sing to me while I accompany you on the guitar. Your voice is soft and low. Not like Seymour's ; nobody can sing like him, to my fancy—he has such a deep, manly voice ; but yours is pretty, and soft almost as mine. Come, let us go."

They arose from their seats, and made their way through the narrow path, trodden amidst the brushwood and long, rank grass, which led to the cottage, some half mile distant.

We have observed that the islands of the African coast are free from the ravages of savage beasts ; but the deadly snake lurks in the forests and burrows amidst the dead leaves, although it seldom ventures into the clearings, and always flies at the approach of human beings.

Harry, being the taller and stronger of the two, was walking first, and pushing aside the tangled branches for his companion, for the trodden path, which led by a short cut to the house, only permitted them to walk in single file. They had reached a turn in the path, which necessitated them to climb up a flight of steps rudely cut in the rock, and Harry was preparing to clamber up, Zuleika being a few steps behind, when the latter was alarmed by hearing her companion shriek. She gazed at him with a look of horror imprinted upon her features ; a huge black snake, which had been nestling amongst the long grass at the base of the rocks, had suddenly coiled itself around Harry, and was hissing furiously and darting its fangs at his legs. Zuleika, in her turn, gave vent to a piercing scream, which brought a negro belonging to the plantation, who was fortunately within hearing, to their assistance. Meanwhile, the venomous reptile had made its escape. Zuleika stood transfixed with terror ; but Harry had fainted.

The former soon recovered herself and saw that the negro, observing the marks of the fangs of the reptile in Harry's trousers had wisely drawn off his boots, for the purpose of applying such herbs as long practice had taught these simple creatures were an antidote to the poison of the most deadly snake, if applied in time. The boots, however, which Harry had put on that day for the purpose of protecting his legs from the various prickly shrubs which so abound in these Islands, had happily

resisted the efforts of the reptile, and excepting the fright he had sustained, he was unharmed.

"Don't fear, *Senorita Zuleika*," said the negro, "de boy is not hurt ; only de fright he hab got. By de holy virgin, *Senorita*, it would be pity such a foot and leg as *Senor Harry* hab got should be bit by de snake and poisoned. G'ah—it is like a *senora's*—so white and delicate."

"Carry him home to the cottage, *Ninez*," said *Zuleika*. "Poor fellow ; he has fainted away ; no wonder ! Make haste and carry him to the cottage that we may apply restoratives. You had better call for some one to assist you."

"No matter, *Senorita*—no matter," replied the burly black, lifting the light form of *Harry* as though it were a feather weight. "Golly ! *Senorita*, he is no more weight den you-sef—light as a girl."

Ninez quickly bore the fainting form of the lad to the cottage, followed by *Zuleika*, and by-her direction placed him on a couch in the apartment. He was about to summon one of the negresses, but was prevented by *Zuleika*, who saw that *Harry* showed symptoms of coming to himself.

"Let him lie there, *Ninez*," said she, "he will soon be better. See, he is opening his eyes. I will undo his vest and shirt collar, and bathe his face with water. He will soon be well again ; poor fellow ! no wonder he was frightened at the dreadful reptile. He has perhaps never seen one of them before."

The negro left the room as he was directed and *Zuleika* commenced to unfasten the upper portions of *Harry's* clothing and to bathe his face with water.

In a moment she started and looked bewildered. Her face flushed crimson and she stepped to the door, as though about to call for assistance, but she returned again and gazed upon the fainting boy's features, earnestly—intently. *Harry* opened his eyes and saw her bending over him.

"Where am I ?" said he. "Oh ! I recollect that frightful reptile ! but you are not hurt *Zuleika* ? We are safe now. How did we escape the serpent ? *Zuleika*, what ails you ?" he suddenly exclaimed, starting up from the couch. "You are pallid as death—tell me you are not hurt ?" In a moment some strange idea seemed to flash through his mind ; he glanced at his shirt collar unbuttoned, the breast thrown open, and his features, but a moment before pale as the young girl's, flushed crimson to the very temples.. He endeavored to speak, but the words stuck in his throat and he could not give them utterance

He advanced towards the girl, but she pushed his extended hand from her with a fury that he had not supposed her capable of. All the latent fire of her Greek nature flashed in her eyes. "Go," she said. "Go hence—touch me not. Ah! was it a fable you told me? You have shattered *my* idol, even at the moment when I worshipped it with the most trusting devotion." She flung herself on a couch and gave way to a flood of tears, while the cause of this distress stood gazing upon her, motionless and pale as a marble statue, for the color had now fled from his brow, and his heart had sunk within him. He was speechless—overpowered by a variety of contrary and almost stifling emotions.

CHAPTER XI.

Captain Junot relates his mishaps in consequence of falling in with a cruiser—Captain Seymour visits Annabon—The secret is kept from him—Harry is left with Zuleika—A slave drove—The Yunga Jagos woman and the lions in the cane-brake—Seymour nearly catches a Tartar.

"HILLOA, Junot, what the d——! 's the row?" shouted Captain Seymour, as the pinnace came up alongside the Dolphin. "You've been in the wars, it seems. Where did you meet with the mishap?"

"*Mille tonnerres* Seymour, *Es'ce vous?* . You have escaped then; but come on board, *mon ami*, and I will tell you."

The sails of the pinnace were lowered, and a rope having been thrown her from the deck of the Dolphin, she came alongside. Captain Seymour came on board, and then the boat was dropped astern, and the two captains walked aft to the quarter-deck together.

"Now, Junot," said Captain Seymour, "let's hear the news, I see you've been at close quarters with somebody; when I first sighted you I thought you had met with bad weather, but as I came up I saw signs of another sort of conflict."

"I have fallen in with those cursed English cruisers and had a narrow chance of capture too; luckily the Dolphin has a good pair of heels, in a light breeze, and those lumbering British crafts, d—n 'em, they can't sail unless they have the tail end of a hurricane blowing at their sterns."

"The d—l! How was it, Junot?" inquired Captain Seymour.

"Why, you see, some days after you and I parted company, I hauled my wind, thinking I'd kept out of the way long enough to throw the cruisers off the scent, and knowing a chap in Liberia had smuggled a lot of *emancipados*, who had been sent on shore from a slaver a short time before, to an assignee on the Ivory coast, for the purpose of selling 'em over again, I thought I would try if I couldn't make a spec with them before I ran down to Loango. Well, a few days afterwards, I made Cape Palmas, keeping close in shore so as to hug the coast all the way along, and satisfy myself that there were no cruisers lurking about: when *diable!* just as I doubled Cape Tabou, what should I see but the two infernal brigs, both lying off and on in the bay, their boats being ashore watering. It was before daylight in the morning, and the land being high thereabouts and they close under it, I never saw them till they had me in the trap, although, curse them, they had seen the Dolphin in the offing. The first I knew of their proximity was, bang—bang—bang; by G—d, a whole broadside poured into the Dolphin, though luckily the shots were fired too high; they wanted to hit the lower masts and topmasts, and the d—ls only managed to carry away my top-gallant masts. As soon as the smoke cleared away a bit, and I recovered from my astonishment at this warm reception, I saw plainly enough both crafts loosing their courses—they were only under their topsails, but were setting their top-gallant sails to make chase.

"You may be sure I backed out fast enough and got clear of the point before they had got their boats aboard and were ready to follow me. They thought they had disabled me, no doubt, and therefore wen't in any great hurry; but they were deceived. The Dolphin was too much for them, even without her top-gallant sails, and after a few hours' chase, in the course of which I ran them nearly hull down, they returned into port, and I shaped the best of my course here. Now you have heard all I have got to say."

"Damnation!" exclaimed Seymour, stamping his foot with vexation. "We shall have them down upon us here, both together; and here have I got my cargo of darkies all ready for shipment. 'This is a d—l of a job.'"

"I don't think there's any cause for alarm, *Monsieur Capitaine*," replied Junot. "They've been cruising off here for several weeks, and old Kettle has thrown them off the scent. My opinion is, that having seen me off Tabou, they'll search

the whole length of the Ivory and Gold Coasts, down to Cape Coast Castle—thinking that it is thereabouts we are likely to search for our freight. To my knowledge there is a lot of Portuguese craft hanging about there, and they'll be so busy with them that they'll give us plenty of time to be off from this. That's why I shaped my course here, as soon as I got out of the sight of the cape. Altogether, there's not much harm done, except the loss of my top-gallant spars."

"If that's all, I can soon replace them. I was just going off to Annabon, but I'll return on shore and put things in train first, in case of accident."

Seymour gave orders for the pinnace to be hauled alongside, and getting on board he returned to the town, the Dolphin meanwhile coming to an anchor in the bay a short distance from the Albatross.

Under the present circumstances Captain Seymour thought it advisable to proceed with the shipment of his cargo of slaves without delay ; that is to say, he caused them to be put on board immediately, with the exception of some of the women, among whom was the *Yunga Jagos* woman, whom he thought it was perhaps advisable to allow to remain on shore, and to recruit their strength as much as possible before they were consigned to the horrible packing of a slave ship's hold, even under the most favorable circumstances. The slaves daily expected from Quaddah he ordered to be also taken on board as soon as they arrived, with the exception of such of the females as might have become fatigued and weakened during the journey ; these were to be placed with the other women, and every means employed to restore them to health, and having thus arranged matters, ordering Mr. Tolcroft, in case he heard anything of the arrival of the cruisers in the neighborhood, to take all on board forthwith, and to proceed to Annabon and lay off and on for him, he left, in the pinnace, for that island. He resolved that he would not, under any circumstances, disappoint Zuleika, although he feared that his promised visit would be necessarily much abridged. Meanwhile Captain Junot, having been provided with rough spars from the Albatross, set his carpenter to work to make new top-gallant masts and yards, and busied himself in hastening the chiefs in their exertions to procure him a cargo.

The passage of the pinnace to the island was effected as rapidly as upon the former occasion—and late one evening, within the specified period of six weeks, the boat was grounded in the

little bay which formed the only harbor, and Seymour leaped on shore, eager as he ever was, to meet the only object of his love, and hurried on through the darkness to the cottage of Zuleika.

Nearly three weeks had elapsed since the evening on which the attack of the venomous snake upon Harry had led to the singular conduct of Zuleika, after she had caused the fainting boy to be carried into her own private apartment by the negro Ninez. The reader will recollect that we left Zuleika in tears upon the couch, and Harry standing gazing upon her, scarcely conscious, and utterly unable to reply to her invectives.

Several minutes he stood thus; at length he ventured to approach the weeping girl, and gently took her hand.

"Dear Zuleika," he said, "do not repulse me. I am sufficiently wretched; indeed I am incapable of doing or thinking of evil towards you."

The young girl's hand trembled in his grasp, and a convulsive shudder passed through her frame. She had ceased weeping, but her bosom was violently heaving, showing the intensity of the feelings that were burning within. She burst into a renewed fit of weeping as he spoke, and at first made a motion to withdraw her hand; but it was not withdrawn.

"Leave me," she sobbed, "leave me. Oh, my God—I cannot talk to-night. Leave me to myself. I will try to sleep. To-morrow I will see you; and—Harry—God grant you may be able satisfactorily to account for yourself."

Harry did not offer to remain—he knew—he felt—that at present the poor child would be best left to herself; but he stopped and kissed her brow, and whispered in her ear:

"Believe me, Zuleika, all will be explained—all will be well with *you*. Seymour loves you devotedly. I have had proof of that. I alone am doomed to wretchedness."

Harry, as well as the young Greek girl, pressed a sleepless couch that night, as the haggard looks of both in the morning sufficiently testified. According to Zuleika's expressed wish, Harry met her on the morrow; he was startled by the expression of her countenance—so grief-worn, so dejected. Poor girl! she had passed a night of intense anguish, felt all the more severely because it was the first real sorrow she had ever known. Heretofore her life—at least since she had passed the age of childhood—had been as a sunbeam, flitting hither and thither, enlivening all it gleamed upon. The little troubles she had known had been merely as the specks in the sunbeam, which slightly mar its transparency, without impairing its

lightness and beauty. Now it appeared to her as though her young heart was crushed; as she had expressed herself in her first burst of passion to Harry—now her idol was shattered; the anchor, to the firmness of which she had trusted her hopes, had been broken. She had lost “her hope, her life, her joy, her all,” and she felt as though that one blow was sufficient to render her future life wretched.

She received Harry in her own apartment, and for some hours they remained together. It was past noon when they came forth. Harry was calm and composed, and the deep gloom had left the brow of Zuleika; but a shade of melancholy, unusual to her features, still rested upon them, and a strange perplexity, as if she could scarcely yet understand what had been revealed to her in that secret interview, was apparent in her countenance.

Still it was evident that confidence had been restored; nay, more than confidence; for the arm of Harry was entwined around the slender waist of his companion, and her hand rested lovingly upon his shoulder; and from time to time the Greek girl raised her head towards Harry's face, and a glance of pity, mingled with the expression of perplexity already noticed. They wandered towards the sea beach, and strolled for some hours along the pebbly shore.

“And you are sure, quite sure that he loves me, as you say?” said Zuleika, in reply to some remark from her companion.

“Quite sure,” replied the other. “Oh, Zuleika, I felt as you did, yesterday, when I first saw that picture in the locket.”

“And he so much admired the picture?” said the girl, her beautiful features losing, for a time, their melancholy expression, and lighting up into a delighted smile.

“He did; who could help admiring it?” answered Harry, kindly; “and he told me I should, perhaps, one day see the original, and bade me not be jealous;” and Harry smiled as he spoke. “Zuleika,” he added, “I am not flattering you—but had I been what both you and he deemed me, he might have had reason for his warning.”

The young girl blushed, and innocently, yet archly, asked:

“Do you, then, think me so very beautiful?”

“I do.”

“Oh, I am so glad of it!”

“Why, Zuleika?”

“For George's sake,” she replied; “but you are very beau-

tiful, Harry—even disguised as you are. Are your country-women handsome?"

"Many of them exceedingly so; but few, very few can boast of beauty such as yours."

Again the girl blushed, and falteringly remarked:

"Perhaps George may think some of them more beautiful than me."

"Set your heart at rest on that score, dear Zuleika," replied Harry; "Captain Seymour, I have reason to know, loves you with a love that cannot be surpassed. If you can be happy living in the knowledge of his love, you may well be so." He turned aside his head and thought to himself, "God grant, poor, artless, confiding child, that the misfortunes which threaten you in the future may never burst upon your head—better before that day arrive that you be laid quietly at rest in your grave."

It is time, so far as the reader is concerned, that we raised the veil of mystery which has thus far surrounded Henry Davis—or Jane Miller—for ere this he must have seen through the filmy gauze. There are yet enough strange mysteries connected with our tale to allow of our raising the curtain and exposing this. Harry's sex was known to Zuleika, but to her alone; it was a long, long period, and many strange scenes were passed through ere Captain Seymour was aware of the fact.

When Jane Miller, therefore, had quitted Zuleika on the occasion mentioned above, and had returned to her own apartment, she struggled long and arduously with her own feelings as to the course she should pursue. She felt convinced of the innocence and artlessness of the young Greek girl, and believed that she could easily satisfy her with regard to the strong affection Captain Seymour entertained towards her. She deeply pitied her in her heart, for she knew nothing of the circumstances connected with her history—nothing of her marriage by the Portuguese padre on the island of Annabon—and she did not therefore know that she was in reality Seymour's wife. This she learnt on the morrow, and while, for Zuleika's sake, in one sense, she was glad to hear it, she perhaps pitied her still the more. She at first resolved in her own mind that she would tell her all: that she would expose Seymour's character to her, and teach her the true worth of the man upon whom she had bestowed the whole treasure of her innocent love—for Jane Miller was but human, and she could not help, in spite of herself, feeling a degree of jealousy which, in the first instance,

had approached to the verge of hatred towards her successful although innocent and unconscious rival ; but this had died away, and had been succeeded, as we have said, by a feeling of pity and deep sorrow for the future prospects of one whom she was conscious deserved a happier fate than that which was probably in store for her ; one who was, by education and natural temperament, so little calculated to endure the burden of a broken spirit ; but she changed her mind, and finally determined that she would only explain the reasons which led her to quit her home on so wild, so unmaidenly an adventure. She knew that, by acting as she had done, and thus boldly repudiating the conventionalities of the social frame-work of civilized society, she had forfeited all claim to the respect of her own sex at home ; but she knew that the artless yet ardent Greek girl, would think but lightly of this—that she came from a people who listen not to the cold dictates of reason when the feelings of the heart are stirred—and she then thought it her duty to set the heart of the poor child at rest ; to assure her of Seymour's love for her, and her alone, and then to let the matter rest, deeming wisely, that " sufficient to the day is the evil thereof." Accordingly Zuleika was told that she (Jane Miller) had loved Seymour, and had resolved to follow him to sea, with what purpose she scarcely knew ; but to carry out this object she had forsaken all—mother, home, and friends—but she had discovered, by means of the locket containing the portrait, that he loved another too dearly for his affections ever to be transferred, and she had therefore resolved to bury her secret in her own bosom—to declare it to no one—had not Zuleika so singularly discovered it. All this seemed plausible enough, even right, and as she would herself have acted to the artless, warm-blooded, ardent Greek girl, utterly ignorant of the conventionalities of life. She listened, doubted, and last avowed her full belief and confidence in the narrator. Thus matters rested when the two girls walked out on the sea beach of the island together.

" And now," said Jane, " to you alone, dear Zuleika, have I entrusted this secret ; it is yours to keep locked within your breast. No sign must be made, no word spoken in the presence of others, which may lead to an exposure. I have told you all in confidence. I have trusted to your generosity. You must not betray me."

" And I will not," replied Zuleika, pressing the hand of her companion.

"And you will call me Harry still, and treat me, at least before others, and especially before your hus— before Captain Seymour, as you have hitherto done." (She could not yet bring herself to acknowledge Seymour to be the husband of Zuleika. Indeed, she believed still that the poor girl had been duped.)

"I will," answered the girl; "but," she continued, "you will go home in George's ship, and go to your mother's home again?"

"Alas! I dare not return home again. You, Zuleika, are ignorant—happily, perhaps, ignorant of the regulations of society as it exists amongst us. No, no, I have for ever placed a barrier between myself and those near and dear to me. I shall not stay longer than I can help with Captain Seymour. I shall go to Cuba or the Brazilian coast, for thither is the Albatross bound, and not to the United States; but my future is a blank"—and she mentally added, "as I fear, my poor child, yours is also."

The mournful tone in which she spoke drew tears to the eyes of Zuleika. She walked on in silence for some moments. At length she said:

"Then why not remain here with me? George said, when last he was here, he would get me a companion. If I ask him, he will allow you to remain here until he gives up the sea."

"He did not mean a companion such as he conceives me to be," replied Jane, mournfully smiling: "you forget, Zuleika; he thinks of me still as his cabin boy."

"Still, if I ask him, he will let you stay—at least until he returns with the companion he has promised me. I will ask him: of that I am determined; but you will stay, will you not," she added—"you will stay if he gives you permission?"

The idea had not, heretofore, struck Jane; but she had begun to feel her solitary position in the world. She now felt how utterly she had isolated herself, and she replied:

"Yes; if without my seeking, Captain Seymour is desirous at your request, that I should stay, dear Zuleika, I *will*."

That beach was, henceforward, the customary and favorite walk of the young women; for no persuasions of Zuleika could again tempt Jane to venture into the cane-brakes; and here, in the cool of the evening, they daily strolled, chatting together on various subjects connected with America and the customs of other lands; but the burden of every theme of

conversation was sure to resolve itself in the end, on the part of Zuleika, into praises of George Seymour.

One evening, while thus strolling, just as they were on the point of going home to the cottage, Zuleika's practised eye discovered the white sail of Seymour's pinnace in the distance, although, to Jane Miller, it appeared only like the white wing of a sea bird, hovering low down in the horizon. Zuleika, however, was certain that it was he, returned to pay his promised visit, and she lingered until the boat drew near enough to render assurance doubly sure—then she and Jane hastened to the bay into which the boat had entered, which was a long distance from their accustomed walk, and they met the captain just as he had turned off from the beach in the direction of the cottage.

One moment more, and Zuleika was in his arms, and nestling like a young bird on his bosom.

"Ah! my Zuleika—you here to meet me? By my faith, darling, but I wish I had half a score of such trusty watchers on board the Albatross. And so you saw the pinnace coming into the bay, did you? and Harry, here, too! Well, Harry, how have you and Zuleika managed to get along together? Does Harry speak *Castellano* yet, Zuleika? If he doesn't, he must have been a sad laggard, and deserves to be whipped."

Thus gaily conversing, the captain, with Zuleika hanging delightedly upon his arm, and Jane Miller walking behind, strolled leisurely on towards the cottage, and as they neared the plantation, the negroes rushed out with shouts of delight to welcome his return.

A sigh escaped from Seymour's breast :

"How happy could I be, even here, with Zuleika, would fortune and fate allow me such a haven of rest," he thought to himself; "but no; it must not be yet, it may never be."

The joy of the young bride was considerably damped, however, when she learnt that, owing to unforeseen circumstances, her husband's visit must of necessity be considerably abridged, and that two or three days at the furthest was all the time he could spare. "But it will not, let us hope, be much longer, my Zuleika," he added.

"One or two voyages more—a year or two at furthest—and then love, we shall be always together." A year or two at furthest! Who can venture to predict what a year or two may bring forth.

But noticing the poor child's dejected looks, he added. "Cheer up Zuleika—I will not forget to bring you out the companion I spake of—and then you will have some one to converse with while I am absent. Poor little thing!" and he patted her head and took her upon his knee, as if she had been really but a child, and he her father. "You must be very dull and lonesome here. Never mind, darling, you shall have gayer times in future."

The young girl strove to be cheerful; her gloom was always of brief duration, and in a few minutes she was prattling cheerfully—happy in the present, forgetful of the past, and heedless of the future. During the evening the captain spoke of Harry—and learnt from Zuleika, that he had been a pleasant companion to her.

"Will you not leave him here, at least during this voyage, until you get me another companion?" she asked.

The captain smiled.

"Really," said he, "I shall have reason to grow jealous of Harry, I am afraid. Why, what a notion, darling! I must first get Harry's acquiescence—the boy may not choose to be left here, even with my Zuleika for a companion."

"Oh! I am sure he will consent," exclaimed Zuleika.

For a moment a strange suspicion seemed to have taken possession of Seymour's mind, but he looked into the clear, soft, dark eyes of the girl, and smiled contemptuously at his own surmises. Strange to say; he had from the first treated Harry as a pet child rather than as one of the crew, and the man who would have struck fiercely to the ground any other person of the male sex, man or boy, who would have dared to have looked with even too ardent admiration upon Zuleika, was content to trust her in Harry's keeping.

"If Harry pleases, *mi tesora*, it shall be so; but as I said, we must get his consent."

The next day Seymour put the question to Harry, who thought it advisable at first somewhat to demur.

"I should not object to stay here a few months with Senorita Zuleika" said he (while speaking of Jane Miller in her assumed character, we shall continue to make use of the masculine gender), "but who will do my duties on board the Albatross?"

"Why, Harry" said the captain, laughing, "you must assuredly entertain a high opinion of yourself, as a valuable hand on board the ship. Frank will go back to his old duties until the ship arrives at the Brazils, when I will pro-

cure a steward—that is if you feel inclined to return ; but please yourself, boy, I have no desire to force you.”

“ In that case I have no objection to stay,” said Harry.

“ Well then, that matter is settled ; but mind, boy, you know the character of my vessel and the nature of the service in which I am engaged. Not a word—not a hint of this to Zuleika—or else you may dread my anger.”

Harry promised to keep silence on this subject, and they parted, the captain being anxious to return to the short-lived society of his idol.

“ Let the world think of me as it may. Let my soul be steeped in crime ; whatever befalls me, I would be pure and true in Zuleika's eyes,” he muttered to himself as he walked towards the cottage. “ I would rather she should die, than I should myself die a thousand deaths, than that she should have the faintest suspicion that I am aught else than an honest man. God forbid, she should know me as I am now—whatever I may be in future.

Two days after this Captain Seymour quitted the island to return to his vessel, and Zuleika was again left to her solitude—yet—not now to her former solitude, for she had, though her husband knew it not, a female companion.

We must now return with the reader to the coast, where the Albatross and the Dolphin were taking in their living freight.

Mr. Tolcroft had made strenuous exertions during the Captain's absence, and when he returned he found that his cargo was complete—that is, that he had as many negroes as he could readily take on board, for Captain Seymour abjured what is termed “ close packing,” which consists in making a row of negroes sit with legs stretched apart, while another row is packed between their legs, and so on until the deck is filled. He found the mortality so great in this case, that of late he had adopted “ loose packing,” in which the slaves are arranged in four ranks, the heads of the two outer ranks touching the sides of the ship, their feet pointing athwart the vessel, while another row is stowed heads against their feet, in the same fashion on both sides ; the little space remaining being filled up by negroes placed lengthwise between the feet of the second row ; thus each slave has as much space as he can occupy lying ; in “ tight packing,” only as much as he occupies sitting. The vessel held considerably fewer by this stowage, but the greater portion were thus brought in a better condition to the market, and realized considerably more in the sale, although even in this

case, on first starting, until the negroes got used to the diet and to the motion of the ship, and until their numbers were thinned out, the mortality was sometimes very great. Such scenes, when the deck is full, surpass description in their sickening horror. Most of the unhappy creatures are sea-sick, and when they are too weak to be brought upon deck in relays, the filth is cleansed, if so it can be termed, by dashing water amongst them as they lay vomiting and groaning and dying around. However, we will leave these horrible scenes to the reader's imagination, and proceed with our story.

Fearful of the visit of the cruisers, which might again receive information of their presence on the coast, both Seymour and Junot were anxious to get away as quickly as possible; and as the slaves were by this time brought to the coast in great abundance, this was an easy matter. Thus, in consequence of Junot's freight being ready shortly after he arrived, both vessels were ready to sail together.

The last boats took off the women, and the few children that had been purchased.

Amongst the latter, Captain Junot had purchased two infants, both seemingly of an age, and both mere babes. Their extreme youth attracted the notice of Seymour, as Junot was carrying them on board the boat in his arms.

"What the d——l!" exclaimed Seymour, laughing, "Captain Junot turned wet nurse. Why, Junot, what are you going to do with that bargain? Bless me, why they surely are not yet weaned!"

"They are fine, healthy children of the *Yunga Jagos* tribe," replied Junot, "and I have a nurse on my plantation in Cuba, who will bring them up if I can only get them over the water alive. I shall make some of the women nurse them. I got the brats cheap—and perhaps they'll turn out a good speculation. If not, I can but throw them overboard to the sharks; they were very nearly becoming food for the lions, any way."

"How was that?" inquired Seymour, whose curiosity was excited. "I heard some tale of that sort from the *Mafookah* at Quaddah."

"Why they belong to a woman who was lately brought down to the coast—and she, it appears, lagged behind with them, and the driver snatched them from her and threw them into a cane-brake. He had been alarmed by the appearance of lions just before, and he was afraid of losing the woman, who was a handsome girl, and would fetch a good price. But somehow, those

beasts are easily scared ; the lions must have got frightened and run away ; for another driver passing by shortly afterwards, found the children struggling and squalling by the side of the cane-brake. He picked them up. He thought he could at least get a few hands of tobacco for them, and he gave them to his women and made them take turns to carry them to the dépôt—where I took a fancy to buy them.”

“And a strange fancy, too. Why, I believe I have bought the mother ; that handsome, sleek-looking negress you see in the stern-sheets of the boat there, sulking, with her head bent on her knees. She’ll soon get over it, though ; but for heaven’s sake keep the children out of her sight.”

“Why not sell me the woman ?” asked Junot, “it’ll save me a good deal of bother with the children.”

“No, no, I can’t part with her ; I took a fancy to her and bought her on my own account. She’ll fetch a rousing price—she’s as handsome and has as regular features as a quadroon—and her color won’t make much odds in the Brazils, where I am bound.”

“Buy the children of me then ?” said Junot.

“Oh, no ! pray excuse me, Captain Junot, I want none so young as them on board the Albatross ; I wish you joy of your bargain. Upon my word you are a fascinating child’s nurse—for pity’s sake don’t let the children get sight of your face,” and Seymour, laughing at his joke, walked towards his own boat, which lay at some distance from that of Captain Junot.

Both boats, however, put off together, and the motion caused the infants to cry. The mother heard and knew the wail of her infants’ voices, borne across the waters, and she grew frantic. It was with difficulty she could be withheld from leaping overboard. She was, however, safely lodged on board. The next day the vessels sailed in company and for two days they kept together.

“That are spry-looking lass takes on terrible about her children,” said Mr. Toleroft to his commander on the third morning. “Mr. Allan tells me she won’t eat anything—it’s my opinion she means to starve herself.”

“Bring her up upon deck and place her aft here ; tie her hands through to one of the stancheons, or else she’ll be jumping overboard. How do the negroes get on generally, Mr. Toleroft ?”

“Why passably well ; ten died on the first day and four yesterday. Allan only picked out two dead ’uns this morning, he

tells me—but there's three or four gone stone blind with that disease they allers catches when they first start—it would be just as well to heave 'em overboard at once."

"Let the poor d—ls die first, Tolcroft; I never could fancy that tossing overboard alive, unless in case of some great emergency. Bring up the woman, however."

"I allers said you were too kind-hearted, Captain Seymour," replied Tolcroft, as he turned to execute the order. "For my part, I goes in for no onnecessary cruelty, but they will die in a day or two at any rate, and it's only a useless consumption of provisions. Now there's Captain Junot, he——"

"Captain Junot can do as he pleases on board his vessel, as I will do on board mine," interrupted Seymour, sharply; "bring up the woman."

The poor creature was brought up and fastened to a stanchion near the wheel.

"Hallo! What the devil have we here, the cruisers by G—d!" suddenly exclaimed Seymour, as two sail came out from beneath a headland, along which the two slavers were coasting. "Junot is close in shore, and they'll have him to a certainty—the fool! I advised him to keep a good offing. Ha! all hands on deck—aloft; make sail there. We must show our heels. It'll never do to be captured with all these slaves on board," shouted the captain; and in a few moments all was bustle and confusion. The Albatross was soon tearing along at a rapid speed away from the coast; but the Dolphin, having less wind in shore, found it impossible to escape. It soon became evident that she had struck her flag.

"The fool! the coward!" muttered Seymour between his teeth. "I would have blown her up before I would have surrendered."

One of the cruisers now bore down towards the Albatross, while the other took possession of the prize. It was soon evident, however, that the chase would be of no avail; and the captain fairly danced with glee when he saw his ship gradually creeping away further and further from her pursuer.

"Hey! what's that?" he cried, as he heard a sudden splash in the water astern.

"It's the woman that was brought up here just now," said the man at the wheel; "she has managed to loosen her hands, and has jumped overboard."

It was true. In the excitement of the chase no one had perceived her, and the poor creature had freed her limbs and

leaped overboard—either to seek an ocean grave, or else in the hope that she could gain the ship on board of which she knew her children to be.

The latter appeared to be the case, for she struck out boldly in the direction of the approaching cruiser.

“D——n !” muttered Seymour, “that girl would have fetched me a thousand dollars. Lower away the boats,” he shouted ; “we’ll have her yet. By G——d, she swims like a fish. No, no; keep all fast—I forgot; we can’t afford to lose time, with that d——d cruiser at our heels.” And the woman was left to her fate.

It soon became evident, however, that she would be enabled to keep afloat until the man-of-war reached her, and she was watched with much anxiety from the ship. The water was smooth, and she could be seen from a great distance.

“She’s gone, I believe,” said Seymour, watching the black spot on the water with his glass. “No—there—she’s up again. I wonder if the man-of-war will ‘round to’ to pick her up. If she stops to do that we’re safe. No, by heaven ! she shows no sign of seeing her. Ah ! yes, she does. There go the studding sails—alow and aloft ! Up goes her fore course !”

She sweeps round gracefully to the wind. Men are seen in the larboard chains with ropes, which they heave to the poor drowning wretch as the ship “sags” down upon her. She seizes a rope—is hauled alongside—half a dozen stout arms are extended, and the *Yunga Jagos* woman is safe on board the man-of-war.

But will she be restored to her children? The vessel they are on board of is a prize to her preservers. We shall see.

“Well, she’s safe, and I don’t know that I’m sorry for it,” said Seymour. “I’ve lost her, but she has served us, too, with her tantrums—she’s enabled us to get far ahead of the cruiser. Aye, fill away, my hearties ! brail up the skysail ! shiver the main and mizzen—brace round the fore yard—right your helm and away. What—you’re going to try it again, are you ? Ha ! ha ! ha ! A snail might as well try to catch a hare. No, you’ve thought better of it, and are hauling your wind. Well best be satisfied—you’ve got one prize, at all events. Junot’s a d——d poltroon, and he merits his fate.”

Thus speaking, Seymour turned away his head, for it was clear that the cruiser had given up the chase, and directed his attention to his own vessel, resolving to keep her on her present course, to make assurance doubly sure, till nightfall. He

saw no more of the cruiser, and the next morning he shaped his course to Aracati, on the coast of Brazil, whither he was bound; the destination of the unlucky Dolphin having been to Trinidad de Cuba.

CHAPTER XII.

The departure of the young midshipman on his first voyage to sea—The peculiarities of Mr. Mordant's views regarding slave dealing on the coast of Africa.

IN a small but neatly furnished parlor, in a cottage, situated on the confines of Jersey City, of very moderate pretensions, although the tastefully trimmed garden, and the arrangement of everthing connected with the household, exterior and interior, marks it to be the abode of a person whose means are at least sufficient to maintain an appearance of respectability, and even to make some faint efforts towards elegance and luxury, are seated a lady—a little past the middle age—and a youth of some fifteen or sixteen years. The countenance of the lady is care-worn and her features wear an expression of melancholy and of suffering; but, evidently suffering of the mind rather than of the body; for she betrays no symptoms of ill-health, save the langour which the fretting of a "mind diseased" has imparted to her frame.

The youth is attired in the uniform of a midshipman of the United States navy—and notwithstanding the regret at the idea of parting from his home, which all his bright hopes and anticipations cannot entirely banish, he evidently looks with pride upon his gay attire, and feels within his heart the buoyancy of spirit which all boys feel when first about to go forth into the world and fight the battle of life. A twinge of conscience may now and then arise and remind him that he is wrong in feeling thus elated, when she who watched over his infancy and childhood is so sorrowful at the thoughts of the parting that is about to take place; but the remonstrance of the monitor, conscience, is forgotten as soon as listened to, and bright visions of the future banish all regretful reflections as soon as formed; all is *coulour de rose* to the boy's mental vision, and unheard of fame and glory, he fancies, await him in the gallant profession into which he is about to enter.

The lady and the youth are Mrs. Miller and her son Thomas—the latter of whom the reader will recollect we have heretofore alluded to, as studying for the naval profession.

“Are all my traps packed, mother?” asks the lad. “Bridget must have everything ready to-night; because you know I leave for Norfolk the first thing in the morning, and to-night I must go over to New York and see Uncle Mordant.”

“Everything is ready, my dear,” replies the widow. “I have packed everything with my own hands. Your uncle has been very kind, and has provided you with a complete outfit, and I have added everything I can think of that can possibly tend to your comfort. I have arranged your clothing properly, and locked up your trunks, and here (handing the youth a bunch of keys), here are the keys. Take care of them, Tom; and now, my boy, there is one thing I have kept out. It is the last thing your mother presents you with—I give you this pocket Bible, Tom, and beg you will read it whenever you have an opportunity. I do not say every day, my boy. I know were you to promise me that, now, in good faith, the promise would be broken—perhaps often necessarily broken—and I do not wish to bind you to promises that are difficult to keep; but read it now and then, as often as you can, and when you read it think of her who gave it you, and who would wish you to consider it as her parting and most precious gift. Open the title page, my dear, I have written a verse there—four simple lines only—but I trust when your eye lights upon them, however far away you may be, you will think of the writer—for, Tom, I much fear you are my only earthly solace now,” (and a tear bedewed the widow’s eye, and she sighed deeply, as her thoughts reverted to the memory of her lost daughter.)

The boy opened the book, and glanced over the following lines:—

“Remember her who gave you this,
When other days shall come;
When she who had your earliest kiss
Sleeps in her narrow tomb.”

“I will, dear mother, I will,” said the boy, and springing from his seat, he threw his arm around his mother’s neck, and kissed her cheek. The embrace was returned, and the youth resumed:

“But, mother, I hope it will be a long, long time before the event mentioned in the last line comes to pass. You are not an

old woman, mother, and I hope to be a captain, and have a ship of my own to command before you die ; and then, mother, we do not know that poor Jane is dead. She may return, and you will be happy again."

"Ah, no, Tom, I fear she will never return. Even if she lives, perhaps, it were better she did not—and yet—what am I saying? Better she did not! no, no, poor child—were she steeped in shame—if all the world should forsake her, she should find a mother's home to shelter her—a mother's heart to receive her ; yes, and without a word of reproach."

The widow wiped away the tears which had gushed to her eyes, and after a few moments' silence, during which she endeavored to compose her agitated feelings, she said, addressing her son :

"Tom, you had better go over to New York as soon as possible, dear, because I should like you to be home early. Your last evening at home, for a long time at any rate, must be spent with your mother, my boy."

"It's now half-past three," said the boy, looking at his new gold watch, a present from his uncle. "Uncle Mordant goes home from the city at four. So I shall just be in time to meet him at —— Place. I shall be back by eight o'clock, mother."

"Do, my boy ; don't be later," replied the widow, and the lad slipped on his overcoat, placed his cap on his head, and started off in the direction of the Jersey City ferry, and Mrs. Miller, in order to occupy her mind till his return, set to work thinking whether there was anything in her power to provide, that she had not already provided, which would add to her son's comfort or pleasure during his voyage.

In the course of an hour, Thomas Miller had reached his uncle's mansion ; the merchant had not returned from the city, but he was expected every moment, and the youth was asked into the parlor where his aunt Mordant and his cousins were seated. Tom was a fine handsome lad, and was rather a favorite with his cousins ; he had always been so, although they disliked his sister. The reason, however, was evident Jane was a much finer-looking and handsomer girl than either Mary or Sarah Mordant, and the very cause which led the young ladies to envy and dislike her, led them to admire the youth. He was some years younger than they were, and he had always been fondled and petted by them. He was complimented upon his appearance in his uniform, and each of the young ladies, and their mother likewise, presented him with a

valuable gift by way of a *souvenir*. Before he had been seated many minutes, Mr. Mordant arrived home and cordially welcomed his nephew, whom, as we have said, he had fitted out at his own expense, perhaps, as a set-off against his short-comings, as regarded the other members of the Miller family. Who shall say? At all events, the merchant shook the boy heartily by the hand, and said :

"Why, I declare, Tom ! you look quite bravely in your uniform. I hope I shall live to see you a commodore, boy. Pity now, there isn't some trouble with Uncle Sam, somewhere or other, so that you might have an opportunity to distinguish yourself—isn't it? However, you'll get on well enough, I warrant, I know Captain P——, of the U. S. ship G——, intimately and I have written to him concerning you. You will have a good berth on board, my boy, I have no doubt, and I hope you will succeed in your profession, and become not only a comfort to your mother, but an honor to the family ; come, Mary, my love," turning to his daughter, "is dinner ready? you'll dine with us to-day, Tom?" he added, again addressing the lad.

"I should like to get home again as soon as possible," replied Tom, "my mother expressly desires me to spend my last evening ashore, with her."

"And so you shall—so you shall—you shall go home as soon as dinner is over ; come, offer your arm to your cousin Mary," and the merchant and his wife led the way into the dining-room.

"Fill your glass, Tom—which will you have, Sherry or Madeira?" said Mr. Mordant, pushing the decanters towards his nephew : "I wish you happiness, health, and success," and he emptied his own glass, adding—"and now, my boy, you can drink the toast to yourself."

"By-the-by, Uncle," said Tom, "your letter did not mention the destination of the sloop-of-war. If you know yourself, I should like to know whither I am bound."

"To Pernambuco, I believe, Tom ; and if I recollect aright, the G—— will relieve some vessel now on that station, and will then wait for orders from the commodore on the station."

"I did make some inquiries," replied the lad, "but no one seemed to know anything about it ; still I saw a paragraph in the paper saying that a U. S. ship was going to be despatched to the coast of Africa—I suppose to look after the slave trade. Now, you were saying that it was a pity there was no chance

of a dust with anybody just now. It strikes me that the coast offers the best chance. Suppose by good luck I should go there, and we should capture some slave ships; you know that would be something in the way of practice; at all events, there seems nothing else likely to turn up in the way of fighting just now; unless, indeed, we were to get into a row with Spain about the Island of Cuba."

"You may, perhaps, be ordered to the coast of Africa, Tom; but I think not; and, for my part, if I were you, I would care little about going there; though, of course, you must go, if you are ordered. It always seems to me poor, pitiful work, that hunting after slavers—a sort of spy system, beneath the dignity of the national service."

"But you surely don't approve of the slave trade, sir?" continued the lad; "I always believed you to be an abolitionist."

"And so I am, Tom; but I think this hunting up the slave ships on the coast of Africa is fraught with misery and death to the negroes. While a market can be found for the sale of negroes, and while the sale continues as profitable as it is now, there will be found persons bold enough to venture into the trade. If the trade were legal, as it once was, and could be carried on openly, more care would be taken of the slaves imported from Africa, and more roomy vessels provided for them, ten times over, than are now provided for emigrants who cross the Atlantic from Europe. As it is, they are crowded into small, fleet vessels, cramped for room and for air, and they die off in great numbers. The government of England, and that of America, too, are answerable for this evil; for whereas, negroes would fall in value, were the trade open and any quantity easily imported, now the individual price of the surviving negroes is enhanced in the market, according to the mortality that has prevailed amongst them, during their passage across the ocean. The dealers still make money, while the government compels them to make it at the expense of the blood of the negroes."

Mr. Mordant had got quite excited while speaking, and Tom smilingly remarked—

"Why, sir, if they were to hear you speak thus in an abolitionist meeting, they would think you had changed your sentiments and gone bodily over to the other side."

"I do get a little excited when I think of the miseries the poor negroes suffer, through the ill-advised endeavors to curb the traffic in slaves; still, I am an abolitionist for all that—

only, I would leave the evil of slavery to work its own reformation."

"By rendering it easy for any number to be imported and sold without restraint or difficulty," said Tom, laughing.

"It is a matter that you do not understand, and which I cannot properly explain," said Mr. Mordant, testily, and Tom, fearing to offend his uncle, changed the subject of conversation.

Dinner over, Tom prepared to go home. He bade farewell to his aunt and cousins, shook his uncle's hand, and received from him a goodly roll of bank notes, as a parting present, and hastened to return to his mother's cottage in Jersey City.

The evening was spent by the mother and son together in earnest conversation, and it was far into the night when they retired. In the morning, at an early hour, Tom arose; the widow was already up—for she had not undressed herself, but had lain down on the couch in her bed-room. Soon the carriage was at the door, and the luggage placed within it—there were more kisses, reiterated promises—still more last words—the driver smacked his whip—the carriage rolled rapidly away towards the railroad station—and the widow Miller, still gazing upon the departing vehicle, was left alone. A sharp pang shot through her heart; she felt she was now indeed solitary, in one sense, childless; for one child had gone she knew not whither—she feared down into the grave—while the other would be separated from her, perhaps for years.

CHAPTER XIII.

Frank Martin's dangerous escape from the slaver—His rescue from the wreck by the G——, frigate—Miss Herbert is introduced to the reader.

"O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free."

MERRILY onward, with a top-gallant breeze bearing her rapidly over the yielding waters, and a sky above clear and serene as that which canopies the soil of Italy, sped the Albatross, on her way towards her destined port in the Brazils. Merrily onward, to outward seeming—the gallant bark, a thing of light, almost of life. Cheerily across the billowy ocean, borne by the breeze,

is heard—long after the sun has sunk beneath the western horizon—the song of the mariners, as they sit on the forecastle, mingling their rough voices in a rude, but—heard under these circumstances—a not unmusical sea ditty; the dulcet tones of the violin and the flute, not touched by the hands of artists, nor giving forth melody such as would please the ears of musical connoisseurs—add depth and richness to the vocal strains; for the rippling waters, parted by the swift keel of the vessel, unite in the chorus, and the dying cadence melts slowly, faintly away in the gentle breeze. Merrily onward, to outward seeming, for a successful voyage has been all but accomplished, the dangers that threaten all illegal pursuits are passed, and a rich harvest in silver and gold—the price of human flesh and blood awaits the adventurers—merrily on, to outward seeming! but what a world of woe, of anguish unutterable, is hidden in the dark hold of that gallant bark.

Rude and savage—perhaps are the natures of its dusky occupants—stolid and sullen their tempers—uncultivated and ignorant—inferior to the rest of the human race, perchance, are the minds of the poor wretches who are imprisoned there; penned up like cattle in the market place, but denied the free current of air, that the beasts of the field are permitted to breathe, even there; their numbers at first rapidly, then more slowly thinned by deaths, the dead bodies lying for hours tossed to and fro amongst the living by the heaving of the vessel, as she dances, seemingly so lightly and buoyantly over the billows, and dragged up and consigned to the deep, each morning like so much carrion, without a prayer being read over them—without a thought of compassion for their fate—nay, amidst the coarse, lewd jokes of the crew. Rude, ignorant, savage, we repeat they may be—they are; but the vilest animal that breathes, has its likes and attachments—to its young, to its kind—to its native soil—to all amongst which it has been accustomed to live; and have these poor untutored negroes no regrets! are they, ignorant and savage as they are, yet still endowed with reason and with human feelings, of less account in the eyes of their fellow men than the dumb beast of the field or forest! So indeed would it seem; but a wail of human woe bursts forth continuously from amongst that wretched herd, and though it fails to touch the hearts of the monsters in human form, who hold them in chains and are about to barter them for gold—it finds elsewhere a hearing, and will be responded to in curses upon the heads of the ravishers and despoilers; perhaps not

yet—they may triumph in their wickedness and cruelty for a time, but though it may be slow in coming, the hour of retribution will arrive—and that most surely. Never yet, but in some way or other the wrongs of the oppressed have been visited with double severity upon the oppressors. * * * *

In the course of a few weeks the Albatross with its living freight arrived safely in the harbor of Aracati, and the negroes were quickly conveyed up the Sagaldo river and disposed of to slave merchants who subsequently took them to Bahia, Pernambuco, Maranhão, and other large Brazilian cities, and easily and rapidly again sold them at a large profit. Captain Seymour was well pleased as he surveyed the heaps of gold that his adventure had brought, as it lay piled upon the cabin table. The crew were called down one by one, and their wages paid and a *douceur* of two hundred dollars presented to each in addition, and each was asked if he would ship for another voyage—after having been allowed a reasonable time on shore to spend his ill-gotten wages, and to revel in the drunkenness and debaucheries peculiar to seamen on the termination of a voyage. All agreed, for they were pleased with the result of the voyage—and satisfied with the treatment they had met with from the captain.

“Now, Mr. Tolcroft, call the boy Frank down,” said the captain to the chief mate.

Frank Martin made his appearance in the cabin.

“Well, Frank,” said Captain Seymour, “considering all things, my boy, we have had a very prosperous voyage, and I am well satisfied. Your articles of indenture, I find, guarantee you six dollars a month, besides providing for your board and clothing. Here is the amount due you, and I have added twenty-five dollars, as a present, out of my own pocket. I am well satisfied with your conduct. You will make a good seaman by-and-bye; and I shall interest myself with Mr. Mordant to further your advancement.”

Frank thanked the captain, and counted his money.

“I suppose,” continued Captain Seymour, “you would like a run on shore with the rest for a day or two. This is Wednesday; Mr. Tolcroft tells me that everything is in order on board. We shall sail on Saturday for Pernambuco. To-morrow and Friday you can have to yourself.”

“If you please, sir,” said the lad, “I should like to leave the Albatross, and go on board some other of Mr. Mordant’s vessels to serve out the remainder of my time.”

"Why—what's the matter, boy? What fault do you find with the Albatross or her Captain?" asked Seymour.

"I have no fault to find with either, sir," responded Frank.

"Why, then, do you wish to leave?"

"When I joined the Albatross, I had no idea of the trade in which she was engaged," said the boy, rather hesitatingly.

"Oh! so you are troubled with scruples of conscience, are you?" replied the captain, smiling ironically. "Well, let me think what's best to be done under these circumstances. Mr. Tolcroft," addressing the mate, "I promised this youth a couple of days' liberty on shore; but, since his conscience is so easily touched, he will undoubtedly be desirous of avoiding the scenes of license and debauchery he will witness if he runs loose amongst his shipmates—so see that he does not quit the vessel on any pretext. And you may as well give me back the money I have paid you, my lad. Since you have no occasion to spend it, it will be safer in my trust."

"Please, sir, I think I have earned my wages, at least," diffidently replied the lad; but his further speech was interrupted by the captain who said, sharply—

"Place the money back again on the table, sir; and, since you are so exceedingly conscientious, go on deck to your duty, and see that you attend to it strictly. It's really a pleasure to have so scrupulous a youth on board the Albatross to remind her captain of his duties. Mr. Tolcroft," he added, "see that this young man's clothing is brought aft immediately, and placed in the cabin; and take care that on no account he quit the vessel. You can go on deck, sir," addressing the boy; and Frank Martin, rather crestfallen, ascended the companion ladder.

"That boy must be looked after," said the captain to the mate, when the lad had retired. "He'll make a good seaman by-and-bye—but I thought at the time it was a foolish whim on the part of Mr. Mordant to put him on board the Albatross. Indeed, had I not felt satisfied that he knew more than it appears he did know, I would not have taken him on board at all. Once here, however, here he must remain."

"I'll keep a sharp eye on the youngster," said the mate.

"Do so," replied the captain; "but don't be harsh with him. Probably by good treatment we may bring him round. Harsh measures will only strengthen him in his foolish notions."

"I've known many such a lad, as had them 'ere scruples of conscience, as you call 'em, to tumble overboard *accidentally* on

a dark night," said the mate, leering horribly, and giving vent to his accustomed chuckle, when he thought he had said a good thing !

The captain did not reply ; and the conversation turned upon matters connected with the ship.

Frank had determined, if his remonstrance with the captain failed, to quit the ship at all hazards, but in his eagerness he had overshot his mark, and he now found himself in an awkward predicament—for, even if he managed to effect his escape, what was he to do without clothing or money ? In one regard, however, his plan was facilitated, for neither the captain or mate thought he would venture to make the attempt in his present position—and thus casting himself on shore in the condition of a ship-wrecked seaman—and therefore, though he was not allowed to leave the vessel, no very strict watch was kept over him during the day, though one or other of the mates kept watch on deck at night.

Frank saw that his chances were desperate—still he resolved to make the attempt. On the Thursday not a chance occurred, but on the Friday he was sent over the side to paint the white streak on the water line. The town of Aracati consists but of a few hundred houses on the north side of a small bay ; and the other shores are covered with wood and thicket to the margin of the beach. The vessel lay at anchor not more than a quarter of a mile distant from the wooded shores, and about a mile from the town, with her stern towards it. The captain was sitting on a hen coop beneath the awning on the quarter deck, on the larboard side, busily occupied in reading. All the crew but the cook, and two of the mates, were ashore ; and the two latter were stretched at full length in the hammock nettings, on the same side the deck as the captain, and lazily smoking their cigars. Consequently, Frank could slip into the water from the starboard bow unperceived, and as he hoped reach the shore by swimming, and penetrate into the woods before his flight was discovered. He made an excuse to come on deck, to reconnoitre and see that all was right ; and finding the captain and officers still in the same position, and the cook busily employed in the galley, he again descended to the plank, and gently let himself off into the water. He was unperceived, and had swam perhaps one hundred yards before it was known that he had left the vessel's side ; but unfortunately at this moment the cook came to the side of the ship to draw a bucket of water for some culinary purpose. He missed the

lad from the plank, and casting his eyes toward the shore, saw him at a distance boldly striking out for the shore. He immediately gave the alarm, and the captain and mates were on their feet in an instant.

"Curse the fellow," said the captain, stamping his foot with vexation. "But he's not far off, I'll spoil his sport yet. Hand me a musket, Mr. Allan."

The second mate took one from the rack round the main-mast, which was always kept full of muskets, pikes, and cutlasses when the vessel was in port, and handed it to the captain.

"Hilloa there!" shouted Captain Seymour to the boy, "come back here, you scoundrel, come back, or I'll fire at you."

Whether the boy heard his voice or not, the command was unheeded; he still swam boldly, manfully on towards the shore.

"Bang!" went the musket, and the ball whizzed through the air, striking the water some distance astern of the swimmer, whence it bounded and rebounded, skipping along past his ears.

"By —— I've missed him this time," said the captain, "hand me another musket, Allan, and take one yourself; and you, too, Tolcroft—I'll show the young scoundrel the penalty of breaking my orders. He'll never break any others."

The boy had heard the report and the whiz of the ball as it bounded past him, and sunk at last some yards in advance; he had momentarily turned his head, but only to turn it back again and redouble his efforts to escape.

"Now, Tolcroft and Allan, take good aim and steady. Fire!" shouted the captain, and the three reports were simultaneously heard. Again the balls whistled through the air; but Frank had, during the interval, placed several yards of greater distance between himself and the vessel, and the balls touched the water at a greater distance behind him than the single bullet had done before—again they skipped and bounded over the surface, straight towards him, but they sank ere they reached him.

"Confound the useless things!" said the captain, throwing his musket contemptuously to the deck—"lower a boat," he shouted, "by —— I'll have him yet, dead or alive."

But a boat was not so easily lowered; the pinnace and long-boat were secured amidships, ready for the ship's sailing on the following day—the jolly-boat was on shore with the third

mate, and the captain's gig, the only remaining boat, had been hoisted on board and turned keel up, for the purpose of being painted; the paint was not yet dry: Frank had been employed upon it, and he had well calculated the difficulty there would be in sending a boat after him.

"D—n the paint!" shouted the captain, in reply to some remark of the mate's in regard to it—"overboard with the boat, quick! we'll be able to catch the young scamp before he reaches the shore:" and the boat was hoisted over the side as quickly as possible; the captain himself assisting at the tackles. Both mates and the captain sprang into it, and seized an oar a-piece, the captain using his whale-boat fashion, to steer as well as to aid in propelling the boat.

The chase was an exciting one. Frank had reached within a comparatively short distance of the shore during the time that had been occupied in getting the gig into the water; but his strength was beginning to fail him—nevertheless he strained every nerve—swiftly the boat cleft the smooth waters of the bay in pursuit, and earnestly the pursuers bent to the oars, for there was excitement in the chase; but their efforts were useless. When within one hundred yards or less of the boy, the latter touched the shore, turned round, waved his hand as if in exultation or derision, and disappeared in the woods.

"Pull in, pull in—run the boat right upon the beach," cried the captain. "We may catch him yet," and in a few minutes more the boat was on the shore, and the captain and mates had sprung out and penetrated into the woods; but the boy was lighter and more active than they. They found a difficulty in pushing through the tangled weeds and brushwood, and soon gave up the search as useless, and returned to the ship, wearied with their exertions.

"By Heaven!" said Seymour, as he reached the vessel's deck, "the boy deserves to escape for his courage; but his escape may be an awkward matter. I should have liked to have caught him."

"Or to have shot him," chuckled Tolcroft.

Frank spent the night in the woods, sleeping amongst the branches of a lofty tree, where he thought he would be secure from the attacks of wild beasts or venomous reptiles—nor did he venture out until the evening of the following day, and then, with the exception of one or two Brazilian coasters, the bay was devoid of shipping. The Albatross had sailed for Pernam-

buco. Footsore and half famished, he reached the town, and there he procured some simple refreshment and the rest he so much needed in the hut of a negro, to whom he related his adventures, as well as he could, for he knew but a few words of the broken patois spoken by the black. However, he found no difficulty in getting a berth on board one of the coasting crafts in the harbor, which was bound to Para—there he joined another vessel, and worked his passage to Maranham, and thence he procured a berth on regular wages to New Orleans.

What little money was coming to him on his arrival at the latter port, together with his advance money, he spent in such clothing as was necessary, and shipped on board a cotton vessel bound to Liverpool.

* * * * *

Just at sunrise one fine morning, about three weeks after young Martin had sailed for Liverpool, the captain of a fine vessel, the appearance of which would have told at once, even to the least practised eye, that she was a ship of war, came on deck, and addressing the officer of the watch, said: "Mr. Ross, let the watch keep a sharp look out. We ought to sight the island of Barbadoes before 'seven bells.'"

"Aye, aye, sir," responded the officer, touching the peak of his cap with his forefinger, and lowering the spy glass which for some time he had kept pointed across the water to leeward. Having replied to his captain's command, and given the necessary instructions to the men, he again raised the glass to his eye in the same direction.

"Our observations indicate that we are to leeward of the island, Mr. Ross," said the captain to the young lieutenant; "I don't think you'll sight the land in that direction."

"It's not that I'm looking for, sir," replied the officer; "but since it grew daylight, half an hour ago, I've seen a black speck thereaway to leeward, which I can't make out properly. I first caught sight of it as I was sweeping the horizon with my glass at daybreak. I thought at first it was a rock; then that it was a float of sea-weed; and then that it was a boat; but really, I can make nothing at all of it."

The captain took the glass from his hands, and peered long and earnestly through it himself.

"I can't make it out," he said, at last. "As you say, it does look like a boat sometimes, and yet, at other times, it looks like a mass of sea-weed. If I thought it was really a boat I would bear down to it; but we have to beat to wind-

ward to weather the island, and we should lose so much ground. Here, Mr. Miller," he exclaimed, turning to the midshipman of the watch, who was standing on the lee side of the deck, "your eyes are younger than mine or Mr. Ross's either; take you the glass and see what you can make of that object."

The youth touched his cap, advanced, and took the glass from the captain. He peered through it for some minutes, and then said: "It does not look like a boat, sir, unless it is bottom up; but I think I can see some figures moving upon it. It looks to me as if they were waving something or other for a signal of distress; but the object is so distant and so small that I cannot properly make it out."

"On deck, there!" shouted an old quarter-master, who, some time before the captain had come on deck, had been sent aloft by the lieutenant with a spy glass, to see if he could make anything out of the dark object.

"Halloa! what is it?" answered the officer.

"That dark object is a boat capsized, and two figures are clinging to it, sir," replied the seaman. "I could not make it out at first, but the sun is shining right upon it now. They are waving something to attract our attention."

"We'll run down toward the object, Mr. Ross," said the captain, "until we are near enough to lower a boat, and then 'heave to;'" and the officer immediately gave the necessary directions to trim the yards and alter the vessel's course.

As the ship drew nearer, it became quite evident that it was indeed a boat, floating keel upwards—the keel barely out of the water, borne down as it was by the weight of two human beings, who were apparently lashed to the rudder stem—and from the appearance of small pieces of wreck, and burnt and charred wood, and masses of cotton burnt to a cinder, and floating heavily upon the water, it was apparent that some sad catastrophe had occurred. It was immediately and correctly surmised that a cotton ship had taken fire and burnt to the water's edge and sunk, and that the hapless beings, to whom help was now arriving, were probably the sole survivors of the crew.

The sloop of war was "hove to," and a boat lowered and rapidly pulled towards the poor creatures, and it shortly returned with a lad and a young woman, both of whom were in such an exhausted state that they were unable to move or speak—a few hours more of exposure, and all human aid would have availed naught, for the female was already insensible.

They were lifted gently aboard and carefully tended by the surgeon and his assistants, and in a short time the youth had recovered sufficiently to tell his story.

The surgeon came on deck and reported the fact to the captain.

"And the young woman?" said the captain inquiringly; "she is not past recovery, I hope?"

"No, I trust we shall be able to bring her round yet—indeed she already shows symptoms of reviving; but, poor thing, she was all but gone when she was brought on board."

"I will see the lad directly," said the captain, "and hear his story. I suppose the young woman was a passenger. Perhaps she was the captain's wife, poor creature."

"No, I don't think she is a married woman," replied the doctor; "at any rate, she wears no wedding ring; but here is a locket, containing the portrait of a young man, which was suspended by a blue ribbon to her neck—and I took this ring from her finger. It is rather a curiosity," and the doctor handed the trinkets to the captain, saying, "I must go down below again, and see how my patients are getting on."

The captain took the locket and ring in his hands, and slightly glanced at the former, but the latter attracted more notice. He examined it curiously, and then handed it to the lieutenant, remarking, "A quaint, curious device, that, Mr. Ross. I never saw a ring like it before; but I must go below and see what the youth has to say."

The ring which the captain handed to the lieutenant was a plain circlet of gold, with a massive setting, consisting of a star of small but pure pearls, and an emerald heart in the centre, and the letter "J" was engraved inside. It was a curiosity, and evidently of considerable value.

The reader will scarcely require to be informed that the sloop-of-war was the U. S. ship G——, Commander P——, on board of which young Miller had received an appointment as midshipman. She had been to Pernambuco, and, after lying in the harbor for some weeks, awaiting orders from the commodore, had received instructions to sail for Havana, with despatches to the American man-of-war in that harbor, which were subsequently to be sent to the United States Government; and after delivering these to the commanding officer of the American ship, the G—— was ordered to proceed, as young Miller had anticipated, to the coast of Africa.

The captain descended below, and questioned the young lad

who had been picked up from the wreck, as to the particulars of the disaster which had befallen him, and which had left so few yet such sad traces behind.

"What is your name, my man?" inquired the captain.

"Frank Martin, sir," replied the youth.

"And the name of the vessel, which, I presume, has been burnt?"

"The Laurel, of Liverpool, loaded with cotton, from New Orleans. The vessel caught fire ten days ago, off the Bahama islands, but a considerable distance to the southward and westward of them. We were not in sight of any land, and could get no assistance. The fire burnt slowly for several days, and we had hopes of getting it under; but at last it burst forth from the hold, and we found that any further effort to save the vessel would be useless. We had barely time to get out the boats; for in an hour after the fire had burst from the hatchways, the vessel and rigging were one sheet of living flame.

"We had three boats, and they held the whole of the crew and a considerable quantity of provisions, but they were sadly overloaded.

"The night after we took to the boats a sudden gale arose, which lasted several hours. The jolly boat, on board of which was the young woman you have saved, together with myself and five others, was capsized, and all the others were drowned. I managed to seize hold of the rudder of the boat, and seeing the young woman struggling near me, I seized a portion of her clothing and dragged her towards me, and succeeded in making both of us fast to the stern of the boat. In the morning, when the gale moderated, no sign of the other boats was to be seen—they were deeply loaded, for everybody had crowded into the larger boats. I fear they are lost. Since yesterday morning we have been tossing to and fro, immersed to our shoulders in water, and the upper portions of our bodies exposed to the sun during the day and to the cold at night. I saw the ship this morning, and attempted to call the attention of the young woman to it; but she was even then insensible. I thought she was dead, but the doctor says she is reviving. I managed to wave my neckerchief, as well as I could with my stiffened arms, and at last had the happiness of seeing that we had been observed, and that the course of the vessel was altered, and she was bearing down towards us."

At this moment the surgeon approached and said, "I am happy to inform you that your companion in peril is out of

danger, and will soon recover. I have left her sleeping soundly. Who is she—a passenger, I presume?”

“No, sir, she was the stewardess of the *Laurel*; her name is Charlotte—at least so she was called—but I never heard her surname.”

“The stewardess!” exclaimed the doctor; “dear me, I shouldn’t have thought that. From her appearance, I should take her to have been delicately nurtured, and her hands show that she has certainly been unused to hard work.”

“Well, I suppose, my man,” interrupted the captain, “you will have no objection to enter your name on the ship’s books, since you have boarded us in such a strange manner; you will then draw your pay from this day. We shall probably be out a twelve-month. The ship is bound to the coast of Africa. What say you?”

Frank thought he might as well make a virtue of necessity, and therefore he readily agreed to have his name enrolled among the crew, and thus the late cabin boy of the slaver became a seaman on board a cruiser bound to aid in the suppression of the slave trade; but as yet Frank, for certain reasons of his own, kept his own counsel with regard to his having escaped from the *Albatross*, on the coast of Brazil.

With regard to the young female, there was no recourse but to take her to the coast, on board the man-of-war, and to send her back to the United States by the first ship that the *G——* should meet with bound thither.

She was very thankful for the kindness shown her by the officers of the ship; but was very reserved—all that could be learnt from her was that her name was Charlotte Herbert, and noticing this reserve, the captain and officers forbore to question her.

In the course of a few weeks the *G——* made the African coast, and cruised along it from Loando as far north as Cape Coast Castle, without meeting with any slavers, and the captain, for the sake of varying the monotony of the cruise, resolved to visit the islands, commencing at Fernando Po, and proceeding southward to St. Thomas and Annabon.

CHAPTER XIV.

The origin of the Mystery of the Rings.

CAN it be possible that two rings have been manufactured of such a very peculiar appearance?" asked Charles Mordant of himself, as he quitted the Widow Miller at the depot of the Jersey City ferry, as mentioned in a preceding chapter. "It may be, nay, it must be the case. I am a fool to trouble myself about the matter."

To enable the reader to understand wherefore Charles Mordant had shown such a degree of anxiety and apparent distrust and uneasiness when he observed the ring alluded to on Mrs. Miller's finger, we must partially retrace our history. The reader is aware that Charles Mordant was, at the period of his first introduction, studying for the legal profession in Boston; but like those of a great many young men of large expectations in the present day, and especially in the United States, his studies were merely nominal. For form's sake he attended chambers occasionally, but the chief portion of his time was spent in the pursuit of pleasure, and we are sorry to say that the pleasures in which Charles Mordant took delight were not of the most orthodox character. To tell the truth he was a frequenter of fashionable saloons, gambling houses, and every other resort of which dissipation and immorality were the leading characteristics. Some six months prior to the date of the opening of our story he had been on a visit to Philadelphia, and while there, by some means or other, he had formed an intimacy with a young lady whose parents belonged to the Society of Friends, and whose name was Jeannette Dixon. On the part of the young man the intimacy had been commenced merely for the purpose of creating some fresh excitement to refresh his jaded spirits. Jeannette Dixon was a very pretty and interesting girl, and young Mordant had met her by chance at the house of a friend where she had been on a visit. He had paid the modest, unassuming girl marked attention; and as he was a good-looking fellow enough—known to be the prospective heir of great wealth, and supposed to be of good moral character—and more particularly as the young woman had heretofore led a very secluded life, and was now just of

that age when the female heart is most susceptible to the attractions of the opposite sex, she had been much flattered by the preference shown towards her by young Mordant. She was shy and reserved at first, but her very reserve, the fact that she kept her thoughts to herself, rendered her more readily though secretly, susceptible to the young man's assiduities and protestations of attachment. The result was, that what in the first instance was merely a pleasurable, flattering sensation, causing her heart to flutter, and her cheek to blush, at the thought of being the object of the young man's especial notice and favor, rapidly ripened into a feeling of love. Charles Mordant likewise began to discover that he felt very different sensations with regard to the fair Quakeress, to those he had previously experienced when he had thought fit to patronize, as he termed it, any young lady whom he could get to listen to his flatteries. He began to feel that he could love Jeannette Dixon, at least as much as he was capable of loving any one but himself, and that if she were of a more wealthy family, that he could be content to make her his wife; but then her parents, though highly respectable, were comparatively poor, and the idea of marriage was not to be thought of in earnest—though he did not hesitate to speak of it to Jeannette, who otherwise would have steeled her heart to all his protestations of love—or, at least, would have striven to do so, and if she could not, would have resisted the temptations that beset her.

Such a rigid watch is kept over their children by the Quakers, that it was impossible that this attachment on the part of their daughter and young Mordant could long be kept a secret from Jeannette's parents, and she was warned by her father and mother both of the difference in the worldly position of her lover and herself, and also told that they would not give *their* consent to their daughter's marriage with any one but a member of their own peculiar sect. Jeannette told Charles of this determination on the part of her parents, but he merely laughed at the prejudices of the old folks, as he called them, and thereby drew upon himself a severe rebuke from his fair and confiding friend. He, however, soon soothed her indignation; told her he would marry her at last, even if he had to wait for years—and left her more than ever assured of his love.

Thus matters continued for several weeks. Meanwhile Mr. Dixon had written to Mr. Mordant, stating in plain terms the connection that existed between the young man and his

daughter, and his own objections to the marriage as well on the score of difference of religious persuasion as of worldly position. He received a letter from Mr. Mordant thanking him for the information—agreeing perfectly with his views—stating that he had other intentions with regard to his son, and that he never would give his consent to his union with Miss Dixon. The old merchant also wrote to his son, expressing the same sentiments, and threatening him with disinheritance if he refused to act in accordance with his wishes. Mr. Dixon showed the letter to his daughter, and endeavored to reason her out of her misplaced attachment; but, as may well be imagined, in vain. She felt confident that Charles loved her; had he not told her so, and added that he would sooner have her for his wife, and earn his own living by the sweat of his brow, than wed another and revel in countless riches, and after that could she doubt him? she asked herself, and her heart responded—no.

Charles replied to his father's letter, saying that it was merely a harmless flirtation that he was indulging in; that he had no thoughts of anything serious, and that the girl and her parents must be very simple to imagine such a thing; to which Mr. Mordant replied that he was glad to hear it was so, at the same time jokingly reminding his son that the moth that plays too near the candle can scarcely avoid being singed at last.

Notwithstanding every precaution on the part of her parents, Charles and Jeannette managed to contrive stolen interviews, and at last he told her in reply to her questioning, that his father would not consent to their marriage; that he was going to Boston to resume his studies, and urged her consent to a private wedding. The poor girl was strongly attached to him; she dreaded his leaving her, and she had already been taunted by her female friends with regard to her infatuation, as they were pleased to term it, to such a degree that her life had been rendered wretched. In an evil moment she consented. She believed that she was privately married by a minister of the Baptist church, when in fact only a mock ceremony was performed by a graceless companion and tool of the young and abandoned spendthrift, and Jeannette Dixon quitted her happy home and followed her supposed husband to Boston. Mr. Dixon wrote again to Mr. Mordant, when he discovered the flight of his daughter, and the merchant wrote and demanded an explanation of his son. The young man

denied any knowledge of the girl, and even said that he believed her to be a worthless creature, whom it were folly for him to trouble himself about farther, and thus the poor distressed parents were left quite unable to discover what had become of their child. Jeannette wished to write to her parents ; but she was forbidden by Charles, who said that he would see his mother in a short time and by her means obtain his father's forgiveness ; but, were the marriage made known now, his father would in his anger, act up to his threats ; and fearful of injuring her supposed husband's future prospects, poor Jeannette was led reluctantly to maintain secrecy.

For some time Charles, who was really much attached to the young woman, treated her with the utmost kindness and attention, and lavished innumerable presents upon her. One day he chanced to step into a jeweler's shop, with the intention of making some purchases, when his notice was attracted towards a ring of peculiar form and great value and beauty. He purchased it and gave it to Jeannette ; but the circlet being too large for her finger, he brought it back the next day to have it altered and to have the letter " J " engraved inside.

At this time, Captain Seymour, who had just returned from a successful voyage, had gone on a short visit to Boston, and as the reader is aware, he had been fascinated in New York by the charms of Mrs. Miller's pretty and interesting daughter. He was desirous of making her a present of some jewelry, and by chance, he wandered into the same jeweller's store that had in the morning been visited by Charles Mordant. He made such purchases as he thought requisite, and was on the point of leaving the store when he said :

" By-the-bye, I should like to look at some finger-rings—I want to buy one for a lady."

The jeweller handed him a tray stored with the articles in question. " I don't like any of these," said he, " they are all too common ; can't you make me something out of the way—entirely new ?"

A sudden thought struck the jeweller. He would make him a ring similar to that which had been purchased by Charles Mordant. It was a singular pattern, and it was unlikely that there were many like it to be found. He described it to his customer, who gave him an order to make it as soon as possible.

" By-the-bye," said Seymour, " engrave the letter " J " on it."

The jeweller looked surprised, but promised to fulfil the order as soon as possible.

He turned to his partner, however, as soon as Seymour had left the store, and said :

"It is a strange coincidence. You recollect about two years ago, we made a ring for a lady who came to the store in deep mourning accompanied by a gentleman—I think they were English, but I forget their names—it was an emerald heart encircled with diamonds, and the letter 'J' was engraved upon it. I made another ring set with similar stones, and yesterday a gentleman purchased it, and to-day he called for the purpose of having it altered, and the letter 'J' engraved upon it. That gentleman who has just gone out, wanted a ring of some novel and strange pattern, and I described the emerald and pearl rings to him. He has ordered one, and strange enough, has requested it to be similarly engraved."

"It is strange," replied the person addressed.

"I shall make two while I am about it," said the first speaker ; "since I had such luck in selling the three, I may yet sell another—as a rare specimen—you know—they seem to take people's fancy, as rarities, but if the pattern were to become common, they would be a drug in the market."

The jeweller, unknown to either Charles Mordant or Seymour, did make two, and thus Charles and the Captain were both provided, leaving one still in the manufacturer's possession.

William Martin, who the reader will recollect we mentioned heretofore as studying law with a gentleman in Augusta (Me.), had about this time come on to Boston to complete his studies. The young man was at this time paying his addresses to a young lady in Augusta, and it naturally enough occurred to him to send her a *souvenir* of his love and constancy. A few weeks after Captain Seymour had purchased his ring, William Martin called at the jeweller's store in question, and asked to look at some rings and other articles of jewelry, and he was shown the *fac simile* of the rings already spoken of.

"That will please Jessica," he thought to himself. "It will be quite a curiosity down in Maine ;" and he immediately purchased it of the jeweller. "By-the-bye," said he, as he was pulling out his purse to pay for the trinket, "I wish you would get the letter 'J' engraved upon it for me."

The jeweller was astonished. He thought at first that he

must be dreaming. The letter "J" began to assume a magical appearance in his eyes; but he promised to get the letter engraved.

"Very strange," he muttered to himself, as the young man left the store; "very strange, indeed. I don't half like it, somehow or other. I won't make any more of those rings."

It was a similar ring to that which Mrs. Miller wore that Charles Mordant had given to Jeannette Dixon; and Captain Seymour had given the ring he had purchased to Jane Miller.

In the following chapter the reader will perceive that Charles Mordant had ample reason to feel the uneasiness he could scarcely dissemble, when he saw the emerald ring on the finger of the widow.

CHAPTER XV.

Showing how Mr. Mordant obtained possession of the Widow's Property.

BETWEEN the City Hall and Wall street, the great financial centre of the city of New York—although, of late years, the Commercial Metropolis of the Western world has stretched itself far, far along towards the confines of the Island of Manhattan—and between Broadway, the great centre thoroughfare of this ever-crowded, ever-increasing emporium of commerce, and William street—leading towards the entrance of the sea, commonly known by the misnomer of the East River—is a dingy neighborhood, amidst a labyrinth of dingy narrow streets; the sidewalks narrow enough at the best, eternally choked up with goods, carted down for the purpose of storage, or set out ready for exportation to all parts of this great Union—aye, and to all parts of the world beyond; or else, less pardonably lumbered with empty packing cases, which the passer by imagines, perchance, to be full, and which, regardless of the by-laws of the city, and regardless of the rights of the foot passenger, are daily paraded by the owners of the rubbish, to be taken in by their clerks at night merely for the gratification of a ridiculous vanity—and to make the world of passengers believe they are doing an immense deal more business than really falls to their share.

In this same neighborhood are numerous rattle trap buildings—the exterior of which, perhaps, may be substantial

enough, though they seldom have any other outward recommendation, while the interiors are in every imaginable process of dilapidation; stairs worn into holes by continual treading; plaster fallen away; dirty passages—with ruinous banisters deluding the unwary visitor with a promise of support, which he would be luckless indeed to trust to, out of which rooms open displaying floors covered with the introdden dust of many years; and windows which, since the day the glazier completed his work, have never known the luxury of clean water; windows from which the dim light that is enabled to find its way into those dark and narrow streets, is half excluded by the neglect of the occupants of the rooms, and in the corners of which spiders innumerable have taken up their abode, feeling secure, in consequence of long immunity from the fatal broom of the housewife—the furniture is scant and dreary as can well be—bare deal stands, furnished with compartments filled with little pieces of lead-colored metal, before each of which stands a coatless individual who is busily occupied in removing the pieces of metal from the stands, and placing them one by one in regular order in a curiously formed metal case he holds in his left hand. A strange click, click, click, as the several pieces of metal are fixed in the case or “stick,” resounds through the room—the floor of which is littered with pieces of dirty manuscript and long slips of printed paper; yet, from these dingy places, daily, weekly, and at all times, printed by night, and printed by day, week day and Sabbath day alike, as may be known by the incessant rumbling of the mighty steam engines and printing presses buried in subterranean caverns beneath the streets, like so many volcanoes in a state of perpetual proximity to eruption, issue the thousands and tens of thousands of newspapers, magazines, periodicals, circulars, and books of all descriptions, which well excuse the boasts of Americans that the people of this country are the greatest readers, and the best patrons of the gray goose quill, in the wide world.

It is from the dingy, murky abodes that we have described, that are constantly being sent forth the clean, clear, well-folded pages of printed matter, which form the daily intellectual banquet of hundreds of thousands of human beings—who, as they read the handsomely printed, well bound volume, little dream of the dreary passage through which its pages have progressed, since the thoughts expressed by the printed letters came from the brain of the author, and were jotted down, as

they struggled into life, on the blotted manuscript. And in this neighborhood, likewise, are numerous offices, scarcely if at all more comfortable than those tenanted by the printers, occupied by a class of men whom it has long been a standing joke to designate as "necessary evils" in a civilized community—the class of lawyers; necessary for what? because the incessant competition in business, and the continual desire amongst civilized men to outstrip their neighbors in the race for wealth, and fame, and power, leads them to fraud and chicanery—foreign to human nature in its uncultivated and less corrupted condition, and compels the intervention of the man of law to settle those disputes which in ruder times were settled by a resort to physical strife. These men herd thick as bees in this vicinity; lawyers of every calibre; men versed in legal lore; of extensive knowledge, and of high attainments—men of such established integrity, and such acknowledged talent, that the finger of envy and malevolence may point at them in vain—men whom to know is to honor and esteem. And here those men herd likewise, who habitually prostitute the little legal knowledge they possess—and who use the means of sewing discord and hatching mischief which their profession gives to them, for the vilest purposes, if a pecuniary reward is held out to them as an inducement to the practice of villany, such as they cannot hope to reap in an honest manner.

It was towards this neighborhood that, as we mentioned in a former chapter, Charles Mordant had directed his steps on the occasion of his visit to the lawyer, whom we have chosen—having an wholesome fear of the law of libel before our eyes, and knowing that the nearer the truth the greater is the libel held to be—to designate by the name of Harvey.

The reader will recall to his recollection the circumstances of the younger Mordant's previous visit, for the purpose of raising money on the security of his future expectations, to meet the demands upon his purse, created by his reckless extravagance.

Mr. Harvey had discovered, by a close examination into some private documents belonging to the elder Mordant, which Charles had brought him, that there was something wrong with regard to a certain property in New Jersey, held by the merchant, which had formerly belonged to Mr. Miller. True, the property had been purchased from a Dutchman, although at a mere nominal price, quite in a regular and business-like

manner; but the lawyer, do all he could, was unable to discover by what right the Dutchman had sold it, or by virtue of what original Dutch claim it had passed from the possession of Mr. Miller into that of Mr. Peyster, who farmed a small property of his own, somewhere in its neighborhood, and who had emigrated from Amsterdam some fifty years before, when a mere child.

Mr. Harvey had made a good deal of money out of Mr. Mordant in a fair and legitimate way, as legal matters go, and now he did not see any just cause or impediment to his making a little more, in the way of "black mail," as it is called by vulgar, little-minded individuals, who cannot understand the delicate operations of speculators upon other people's finances—especially if he could prove the merchant guilty of under-handed and fraudulent dealings with a simple and unprotected widow woman, and that widow woman his own near relative, and could frighten him by threats of exposure; therefore, when the young spendthrift, Charles, called, he had put off until the following Monday the further consideration of the young man's business, and had determined, meanwhile, to hunt up the said Dutch farmer, Mr. Peyster.

This was no very difficult matter, for the plodding old Dutchman did not reside more than thirty miles from New York, in the neighboring State of New Jersey; and Mr. Harvey took the railroad cars to a certain village where was located the nearest depot to the farm, and then, hiring a wagon from the landlord of the village hotel, he set off by himself towards the residence of the farmer, whom he found guiding the plow with his own hands across the furrows of one of his own fields.

"Good morning, sir; good morning!" said Mr. Harvey, who had dismounted from the vehicle, and making the reins fast, had proceeded across the field to where the Dutchman and his son were employed.

"Have I the pleasure of seeing Mr. Peyster?"

"Mine name is Peyster," said the Dutchman, surlily, and without discontinuing his labor; "but I don't know what for it should be any bleasure to you to know dat—w-hit, g'lang!" shouting to the horses that were yoked to the plow, and cracking his whip, leaving the lawyer in some doubt whether the expression applied to himself or to the horses.

"But, my good sir, if I should happen to have business with you that would put money in your pocket and mine, then,

perhaps, it would be a mutual pleasure for us to hold conversation together."

"So! I likes de money—bus'ness mit me, eh? vell, vat bus'ness has you mit me dat shall be bleasant to us both?"

"My dear sir, I am a lawyer, and——"

"Der tuyfil you is!" interrupted the farmer, "den let me tell you I wants no bus'ness nor no bleasure mit you neider, mynheer—w-hit, gee whoo! vat der tuyfil is de matter mit de horses?"

Mr. Harvey saw at a glance that the Dutchman was a rude, ignorant clown, yet he judged him to be a shrewd fellow withal, with whom it was no use to beat about the bush, so he resolved to come at once to the purpose of his visit.

"I called respecting a little property near your farm—adjoining it, I fancy—which you sold some time ago to Mr. Mordant of New York. Let me see; how long ago was it?"

"Vat ish dat to you? I sold it, and I got de money and I spends him—dat is all."

"Not quite all, my good friend, since I have reason to believe the property was not yours to sell, and the rightful owner is about to reclaim it."

"It vas not mine to sell!" exclaimed the Dutchman, "who tells you dat? If he vas not, I've not got him now. Mr. Mordant has got him, and dey must go and ask him—I has'nt got noting to do mit him."

"But it is upon you that the claim will be made by Mr. Mordant for the money he paid you for the property, unless you have the title deeds to prove your claim over that of the late Mr. Miller."

"I knows noting of de late Mr. Miller—I never see him—Mr. Mordant told me de estate vas mine, and I sold him for less as he was wort, too—it is no bus'ness of mine."

"You will find to your cost that it is business of yours, and very serious business, too, my good sir, unless you can prove that you really had a claim upon it, or, indeed, unless you were deceived, overreached by Mr. Mordant."

"Vy, vat vill dey do mit me—take mine varm from me?" said the Dutchman, evidently growing alarmed. Suppose I vas deceived—vat else you call it—by Mr. Mordant, vot den?"

"Then, perhaps, in consideration of your ignorance, the odium would fall upon the merchant, and he *might*—mind I do not say he *would*—be compelled to make restitution to the real proprietors out of his *own* pocket."

"Vat can I do mit de matter?" asked the Dutchman, now stopping his team, beside which the lawyer had hitherto walked, his feet sinking into the sandy, clayey soil at every step he made.

"Finish your furrow, and then hitch up your team to the gate for half an hour, and step into the farm-house with me. I told you at first I wanted to talk matters over with you, and perhaps to help you as well as myself to a way of getting a little money."

This the farmer agreed to; and the furrow completed, he hitched the team to the gate, and led the way into the farm-house.

"Now," said Mr. Harvey, when he and his boorish companion were seated—"now, it is very probable—indeed, I may say certain, that the prosecuting party will put this matter into my hands. I shall in that case have to prosecute you as principal in, and Mr. Mordant as accessory, towards the perpetration of a wicked and flagitious fraud—one that will arouse the indignation of the whole community and cause the utter ruin of you both; unless *you*, by divulging to me now, the means by which Mr. Mordant induced you—*ignorantly*—you mark me! to suppose the property to be yours, and to sell it to him for less than its value—enable me to plead that ignorance in your behalf, in a court of justice. It will, let me add, be useless to deny it; because, I tell you at once, I know all about the matter."

"Vat you come for, den—to ask me to tell you vat you know? Vat for you not go to Mr. Mordant. I am a poor man—I have got no money to give you."

"When I say, I know all about the matter, I mean that I am perfectly aware that fraud has been committed by both you and Mr. Mordant; but I am willing to believe that Mr. Mordant deceived you—took advantage of your ignorance, and that the crime rests upon his shoulders."

"So it does—so help mine Got, it does," exclaimed the farmer, now thoroughly frightened. "I had notting to do mit it, but to take the monies he paid me—mine Got, and spend him too. *Dunder an Blitzen* I spends every shent of him, long ago."

"Well, well, my good friend; don't be alarmed. *You*, I tell you again, if you conceal nothing from me have nothing to fear for yourself. Now, tell me," and the wily lawyer hitched his chair closer to the farmer and laid his hand encouragingly

upon his knee, "now tell me, my honest friend, how this little affair was managed?"

The Dutchman hemmed and coughed to clear his throat, and sat for some moments in a brown study—seemingly endeavoring to recall the subject to his memory. At length he exclaimed :—

"I must take a smoke mit my pipe—mine Got! I can tink of noting till I have smoke mit my pipe."

"Smoke, by all means, my friend," said the lawyer, who, although annoyed at the farmer's dilatoriness and stupidity, knew he would gain nothing by crossing his humor.

The pipe was produced, filled and lighted, and patiently puffed for a full quarter of an hour before the ideas of the Dutchman began to brighten up. At last he laid it aside and commenced.

"It might be ten years ago—and p'raps more longer as dat—Mr. Mordant comes to me von day ven I was plowing on my farm, just as you came to-day, and he says :—

"'Goot morning, Mynheer Peyster'—and I said, 'goot morning Mr. Mordant'—because I knowd him a goot long time before—and he said 'I am glad to hear of your goot fortune, Mynheer Peyster—that is a nice little property you have got.'

"And I said, 'Vere is my property Mr. Mordant? You are joking mit me.' 'Cause den I only rented the little farm I owns now.

"'Vat!' he cried; 'you doesn't know dat your great grand-fader, who came out to this country by order of the States General of the Nederlands, many years before you was born, owned all dis nice property hereby, and you are the rightful heir to it!'

"'No,' I tells him—and he says—'tink now Mynheer Peyster, tink whether you never heard your fader, ven you vas a little boy in Amsterdam, speaking of his property in America,' and he put a piece of money in my hand and says, 'let's come into de house, Mynheer Peyster, and talk matters over,' jist as you said jist now: and I walks into de house, as I did mit you, and takes my pipe and lights him, and begins to smoke and to tink."

And thus reminded of his favorite indulgence, the Dutchman again took up his pipe and commenced to smoke, and Mr. Harvey was compelled to wait until he again laid the pipe aside.

“‘At last,’ he continued, I turned to Mr. Mordant and looked him in de face and said—‘I have been tinkin’ over de matter.’

“‘And at what conclusion has you arrived?’ he asked, putting anoder piece of money into my hand, and I looked at de coin and said, ‘*Yah*—I tink I do recollect sometin’ of de kind.’

“And he put his hand in his pocket and took out his purse, and said :

“‘Tink again my vriend—be sure of it,’ and I said, looking at de purse,

“‘*Dunner and blitzen!* I am sure of it now.’

“‘And it was in New Jersey,’ said he, ‘on a portion of the State that was formerly subject to Holland—in fact it was in dis neighborhood,’ and he pulled open de strings of his purse.

“‘*Yah!*’ I said, ‘I recollect now it vas here.’

“‘You are *sure?*’ he said, laying a bill on de table. ‘Quite sure,’ said I, and I took up de bill and put it in mine pocket mid de rest ob de money.

“And Mr. Mordant said, ‘vat a shame it was dat de poor Dutchmen should be cheated out of dere rights—and I said :

“‘*Yah!*’ and Mr. Mordant went on.

“‘Suppose now I should happen to find dis old claim of yours—vould you sell me de estate at a reasonable price?’

“‘*Yah,*’ said I, and he replied, ‘good morning, Mynheer Peyster,’ and vent away, and I took up mine pipe and sat and smoked and counted the monies and tought I vas in luck.

“A week afterwards he came again, and brought mit him an old lawyer—who had a dirty piece of parchment in his pocket, and dey said dat vas my claim, and asked vould I sell it—and I said ‘*Yah,* I vould,’ and dey offers me a tousand dollars for it, and I takes it, and den I goes and buys dis farm mit de money, and gets me a vife, dat is all I knows.”

“Hem!” exclaimed Mr. Harvey—“very well and clearly told, my friend. Now, if I give you twenty dollars, will you relate this to-morrow in the presence of a witness—whom I shall bring here? Mind, the relation must be made *voluntarily* on your part—say one word of the money, or of any previous visit from me and you are a lost man.”

“I vill take de monies,” answered the farmer.

“Very well, now, can you write?”

“No, but mine *vrouw* can.”

“Then let her write a letter which I will dictate.”

"As you please," said the farmer—and he called his wife into the room.

"Your husband, Mrs. Peyster," said Mr. Harvey, "wishes you to write a letter to a gentleman in New York, which I will put in the post-office for him as I go through the village."

"I shall be happy to write it, sir," said the female, who was a smart, tidy American woman.

"Then please to write as I dictate."

Holly Farm—New Jersey.

"DEAR SIR—Can you call at our farm at your earliest convenience, and bring a gentleman with you who will serve as a legal witness? My husband has something to communicate to you, as Mr. Mordant's legal adviser, of the utmost importance to him, and to that gentleman also. On no account, however, mention this to Mr. Mordant until you have called upon my husband or your visit will be useless.

Respectfully,

CATHERINE PEYSTER,
for my husband, Peter Peyster."

"I hope, sir, there is nothing in this letter calculated to injure my husband," said the farmer's wife, when she had finished writing, looking anxiously at Mr. Harvey.

"Nothing whatever, I assure you; on the contrary, it will result to his benefit. Now," he added, "please to direct the letter to

"John Harvey, Esq., Solicitor, &c., &c.,

No—, N— street,
New York."

The letter was directed and sealed, and dropped into the post-office at the next village, and Mr. Harvey wished the farmer and his wife "good-day," and returned to New York.

On the following day he again visited Peyster, taking with him his clerk, and the depositions of the farmer were duly taken down, and the paper signed by both the parties.

Thus armed, Mr. Harvey returned home, and on the same evening visited Mr. Mordant. That gentleman was seated with his family in the parlor; but upon hearing that Mr. Harvey wished to see him, he directed lights to be placed in his study, and proceeded thither to meet him.

"Good evening, Mr. Harvey," said he, "pray be seated.

To what am I indebted for the pleasure of such a rarity as a visit from you?"

"To a matter involving rather serious consequences, my dear sir," said Mr. Harvey, taking from his pocket the document containing the depositions of the farmer.

"Bless me! what's the matter?" exclaimed Mr. Mordant. "Nothing having reference to that scapegrace son of mine, Charles, I hope; that boy, Mr. Harvey, is a source of great uneasiness to me—not that I believe there is anything really evil in his disposition, but he is wild, extravagant, and careless. Young men now-a-days, sir,—the sons of wealthy parents, who know that they will be in future amply provided for—are dreadfully improvident, and are a source of great anxiety to their parents."

"Set your mind at ease on this subject, Mr. Mordant; this matter does not relate to the young gentleman, but to yourself more particularly. We men of law, Mr. Mordant, are sometimes placed, with regard to our clients and patrons, in rather an awkward position. I was sent for, a day or two since, by a man named Peyster, a Dutch farmer I believe, who having got some strange whim in his head, fancied that his conscience troubled him on account of the disposal of some property he came into in New Jersey several years ago, which was supposed, as far as I can learn, to have belonged to a clergyman named Miller—a relative of yours, Mr. Mordant, but upon which property this Peyster had an old Dutch claim. Here is the letter, you see. Please to read it" (handing the letter he himself had dictated, to Mr. Mordant.)

The merchant read the letter, and returned it, merely saying—

"Well, pray proceed, Mr. Harvey. What then?"

"Thinking that, perhaps, some interests of yours were involved, I visited the man according to his request, and found that he was a rude, ignorant Dutch farmer, but very shrewd and intelligent, Mr. Mordant. I may say, sir, *very* shrewd."

And the lawyer refreshed himself with a pinch of snuff, handing the box afterwards to Mr. Mordant.

"No, I thank you," said the latter, "I never indulge in taking snuff; but what was the nature of the subject upon which he wished to speak with you?"

"It related to the property in New Jersey, as I have said," replied Mr. Harvey. "Here are the depositions he made. I will read them," and the lawyer read them through steadily

and with emphasis. "You see, my dear sir," he continued, when he had concluded the reading, "that this document will place you in a very awkward position—a very disagreeable position, indeed, if the man should choose to be obstinate."

"But, Mr. Harvey, who will take heed of the ravings of a man like Peyster? he is laboring under some delusion. I have the deed in my possession, and will show it you. It is proof indisputable of the claim—which I purchase in good faith;" and the merchant rose from his seat, and proceeded to extract the deed from an iron safe in the study.

Mr. Harvey was fully prepared for him; he had not resolved upon his action in this matter without providing himself with every necessary means to go through with it. When Charles Mordant, amongst other things, had abstracted this deed from his father's safe in order fully to satisfy the lawyer of his future ability to reimburse any amount of money he could raise for him, Mr. Harvey had accidentally held the yellow parchment up to the light, and discovering, by the merest accident, the private mark and date of the manufacturer of the parchment, found that it had been manufactured in London, upwards of a century after the conquest of New Netherlands by the British, in fact some time after the Declaration of the Independence of the United States of America; and this he knew was sufficient proof of its being a forgery, and that the appearance of age had been affected by artificial means. This discovery it was which had let him into the secret of the fraudulent possession of the property of Mr. Mordant, and had determined him with regard to his future operations.

He had carefully taken a copy of the deed; making a special note of the date on the parchment, in the margin, and had subsequently given the parchment an appearance of sufficient age, and then, when Charles had visited him a second time, he had directed him to replace the will and deed, and the other documents. It was this copy he had shown to Mr. Peyster.

No sooner was the deed shown him, triumphantly, by the merchant, than his quick eye glanced at the mark, which was only observable by a keen scrutiny when the parchment was held in a particular light.

"Humph!" exclaimed the sharp-witted man of law. "Who was the attorney who effected the transfer of this deed, Mr. Mordant? It was before I was honored with your patronage?"

"His name was Johnston. He died suddenly about a year

afterwards. He was a keen fellow ; one not likely to allow himself to be taken in."

"Excuse me, Mr. Mordant, I meant no, offence sir, indeed, I should be sorry to suppose for a moment, that you were privy to the roguery which is apparent in this affair ; but, I should say that this Mr. Johnston *was* a keen fellow. He made a copy of the deed, which, by some means or other, has got into Peyster's hands, and the perusal of which has led to the qualms of conscience, which induced him to send for me. On that copy, in the margin, it is stated that the manufacturer's mark is dated many, many years subsequently to the protested grant of the land. Now, I see that the original deed, which professes to be a grant of a certain quantity of land to Pierre de Peyster—the ancestor, I presume, of the farmer Peyster of whom you purchased the estate—is dated in the year 1654, while the parchment on which it was written, was manufactured in the year 1789. A most conclusive proof Mr. Mordant, of the worthlessness of the deed."

Mr. Mordant turned pale. He, for the moment, forgot himself ; and said—

"But this man Peyster is an ignorant fellow. He cannot read. How could he have made the discovery ?"

The astute lawyer took no heed of the implied admission of his knowledge of the forgery on the part of the merchant ; but he replied—

"You forget, my dear sir, that his wife can read : recollect it was she who wrote the letter in her husband's name. Oh ! these women are always up to some mischief."

"I must have been deceived by Johnston ; he must have been a consummate scoundrel," said Mordant ; "but, really, this is a most unpleasant business. Excuse me, Harvey, but you must be aware in what an awkward position I should be placed should the affair be bruited abroad. It is a matter of days gone by—"

"And all the more unpleasant, in consequence of the former proprietor being a relative of yours, I believe," said Mr. Harvey, calmly interrupting the merchant, while he helped himself to another pinch of snuff. "People are so prone to scandal now-a-days, that your enemies, and every man in business—especially every man of wealth like you, my dear sir, has enemies. Your enemies, I say, would seize upon the facts, as a capital pretext to destroy the excellent reputation for integrity that you enjoy."

"What can be done under the circumstances?" inquired Mr. Mordant, in an agitated manner. "The matter as I have observed, is an affair of days gone by. No one could be injured if it were hushed up."

"You forget, my dear sir; that the depositions were taken down by me in the presence of a witness."

"True; but, perhaps, for a consideration that witness might be silenced."

"But," again interrupted the lawyer, "if I mistake not, Mrs. Miller, the relict of the Reverend Ebenezer Miller, and the rightful owner of the estate, is still living, and has a son still living, and *she*—the widow—is, I believe, in a condition of comparative poverty. She would certainly obtain possession of the property, if she brings forward a suit, and also to all the proceeds, rents, &c., for the last ten years or more. Yes, she would most certainly," he added, in a thoughtful manner. "No doubt of it."

"What, then, would you, as my legal adviser in this matter, and one in whom I place implicit confidence," said Mr. Mordant, in a conciliating tone of voice, seeing that he was at the lawyer's mercy, "What would you, my dear friend, advise me to do?"

"Acknowledge at once," said the lawyer, "that you were deceived by the false representations of Mr. Johnston, and restore the property, rents, and accumulations to the widow."

"But are you aware, Mr. Harvey, that the rents of that estate, which, when I purchased it, were worth only \$300 per annum, now amount to \$1,000, and have realised that sum for the last five years? Why, my dear sir, I should feel the loss severely. All my available capital, you know, as well as I do, is employed."

"There is one way by which the matter might be settled," replied Mr. Harvey, after having sat for some moments apparently buried in thought. "I am aware how seriously the loss of reputation would injure your credit; and I know also, that when people are used to poverty, they are often really happier under the privations it entails, than they would be if rolling in wealth. I have no doubt Mrs. Miller is contented as she is, and I should be really sorry to see you, one of my wealthiest and most respectable—let me add, most respected clients brought into trouble. For myself, I care nothing. It is my duty to do the best I can for those who employ me to manage their affairs; but this witness whom I took down with me, not

suspecting for a moment, Mr. Mordant—I would wish you to understand that—that anything of so serious a nature was to be disclosed—this witness, I say, will require to be largely paid to maintain silence. But I think I could manage to seal his tongue ; yes, I think I *could* manage it.”

“By what means? Mention how, and you will find me ready to meet your views,” said Mr. Mordant, much excited.

“It would be rather expensive,” continued the lawyer ; “I could buy him over, and pack him off to Europe or to California, and the probability is he would never be heard of again.”

“And to effect this, how much would you require?”

“Why, it is difficult to say. Perhaps, for two or three thousand dollars, the thing might be done ; yes, I should say that I could manage it for three thousand dollars.”

“Three thousand dollars !” exclaimed the merchant.

“Three thousand dollars, cash,” interrupted the lawyer.

“It is a very large sum,” continued Mr. Mordant, with a sigh ; but I suppose, if you say so, I must consent to pay it. Really, this is a most troublesome affair—a very distressing affair.”

“It is, indeed, my dear sir,” said the lawyer ; “but now, I presume, we may consider it as settled. You will draw me a check for the amount.”

And with a sad heart and an unsteady hand the merchant drew the check and presented it to the lawyer, who rose to take his leave, saying, as he shook the merchant by the hand, on leaving the study—

“I congratulate you, my dear sir, on the successful arrangement of this little difficulty, for it may now be considered as settled—yes, you may now rest assured that it *will* be settled.”

And he descended the stairs, and a moment afterwards Mr. Mordant heard the slam of the street door, as the servant let the lawyer out.

“A most consummate hypocrite—a finished scoundrel, that fellow,” muttered the merchant, as he listened to the retreating footsteps of the lawyer. “He has actually swindled me out of that money. Three thousand dollars ! But I can’t help it. He is too conversant with my affairs for me to treat him with the contempt I otherwise would. Well, it’s of no use lamenting the loss of the money. I must just put up with it.”

So saying, Mr. Mordant descended to the parlor and joined the family circle, where he endeavored to banish from his

mind the recollection of the unpleasant transactions in which he had been engaged.

"I have Mordant under my thumb now, at all events," muttered Mr. Harvey, as, with the check in his pocket, he plodded his way homewards; and, by Jove! I'll keep him there—screw him down like a vice;" and he fairly spit out the words. "However, I've made three thousand dollars by my day's work, and that will do for the present; but I don't mean to destroy the copy of that deed, as I promised I would. Oh, no; I shall take good care of that.

The lawyer reached the door of his own house and entered it. He retired to rest, and dreamed that night of his gains—and in fancy invested his ill-gotten spoil in various speculations. But were his dreams all happy? Oh, no, no! A guilty conscience weighed like a nightmare upon his breast as he slumbered, and dreams of fortune could not restore peace to the mind from which conscience had long since driven it forth.

On the following morning, according to appointment, Charles Mordant called upon Mr. Harvey at his office in N—— street, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the lawyer would advance him the money he required.

To a certain extent Harvey was satisfied with the aspect matters wore. It was a part of his conceived project to entangle the young man in his toils, and the money was readily advanced, security having been given by Charles upon the property of his father, when it should come into his possession on the old gentleman's death.

But Charles, amidst all his idle pleasures and gayeties, had his troubles—troubles which drove him deeper and deeper into the dissipations of drink and gambling in order to strive to banish them. He had once or twice since the day on which he had conducted Mrs. Miller to the ferry boat, called upon that lady; having been led to do so in order that he might more closely examine the ring which had attracted his attention when upon her finger. He wished to ascertain if the letter he had caused to be engraved upon the inside of the ring he had given to Jeannette Dixon was on that worn by Mrs. Miller, otherwise so similar; and at length, under pretence of simple curiosity he begged her to let him examine it. The widow took it from her finger and presented it to him. He eagerly glanced at the inside, and there was the letter J plainly engraved.

"It is that letter," said the widow, observing him notice it, "which satisfies me that it really belonged to my poor unfor-

fortunate Jane. I should indeed have recognized it by the peculiar setting ; but that makes suspicion certainty, in spite of the anonymous letters I am still receiving, telling me that my poor dear child is still living."

Charles Mordant became pallid as a corpse as he gazed upon the ring. The widow thought he was touched with pity for her daughter's fate; and her heart softened towards the young man, who, complaining of indisposition, rose to take his leave.

"God bless you, Charles," said Mrs. Miller, as she shook his hand. "I feel truly grateful to you for the sympathy you feel for my loss. The poor fellow cannot hide it from me," she added, as he left the house. "Poor Charles, I wonder if he was attached to Jane—the thought never struck me before, yet it might have been so. Young men now-a-days are not apt to exhibit such distress at the mere thought of even such a sad loss as that of mine."

And Charles, as he returned to the city, thought to himself, "Yes, poor Jeannette has carried out her threats of self destruction. She told me she could not bear to live any longer, if she discovered that I had deceived her by a false marriage. God knows who could have put that fancy into her head ; but she must have discovered the truth. Indeed, I thought as much that evening when we were walking together on the Elysian Fields at Hoboken—and then that body found so shortly afterwards, just on the spot, too, and the ring upon the finger. This Captain Seymour might have given a ring that Mrs. Miller thinks resembles this to her daughter; but it is quite improbable that he would have caused the letter J to be engraved inside, and in the same style, too. No, no. God forgive me ! I have caused poor Jeannette to commit suicide, and her blood will call to heaven for vengeance upon my head." And the young man, hardened as he was by vice and dissipation, shuddered as he thought of the dreadful fate of his trusting and betrayed victim.

CHAPTER XVI.

A Shark Story—The Mystery of the Recluse of the Island of Annabon.

THE U. S. ship G——— came to anchor in Clarence Bay, Fernando Po, after having spent several weeks in cruising

along the neighboring coast, in the vain endeavor to discover any traces of slavers. The British brig of war *Rapid* was at anchor in the harbor, as well as two or three merchant ships, the masters of which had come for the purpose of trading for fancy timber, which certainly in its live state should have been sufficiently abundant on the Island, since from one end to the other, and all round to the shores of the sea, it is overgrown with dense, almost impenetrable forest, as are most of the islands upon the African coast in tropical latitudes ; although again, as is the case in most of these islands, a lofty, grim, sombre-looking mountain rose in the interior, amidst the crags and precipices of which probably no human foot had ever trodden—since it is generally supposed that the interior of the island, which is of considerable extent, is uninhabited.

There was little to occupy the men on board the *G——*, and therefore the crew enjoyed liberty on shore by turns during their stay ; and the officers of the *G——* interchanged visits with those of the *Rapid*, and accompanied each other in boating, fishing, and shooting excursions. Roads there were none, and but a small settlement on this portion of the coast—another, still smaller settlement, being formed upon the opposite shore ; both settlements being peopled with a few dozen whites, consisting of Englishmen and Spaniards—but no women—and the remainder of the inhabitants consisting of coolies and the rude natives of the island, who had been tempted to take up their abode near the European intruders, in the hope of gain. The island was but scantily populated with natives, who bore a ferocious character, having, it is said, once or twice risen and massacred the early Spanish settlers. Be this as it may, at this time they appeared to be the very reverse of ferocious, and were glad to be taken notice of by the sailors, and willingly brought off pine apples and other tropical fruits to the ships, in their rude, fragile canoes—which they exchanged for tobacco and half-worn articles of clothing ; and the impression generally prevailed that the ferocity formerly imputed to their charge was occasioned by the cruelties of the Spaniards, who, it was said, hunted them down with bloodhounds, for the purpose of forcing them into slavery—a condition to which the simple natives had a most insuperable objection.

The natives of Fernando Po are a fine, athletic race of savages—possessing, it is true, both the negro frizzled hair and the negro cast of countenance ; but being in general finely modelled, and free and independent in their carriage. Their

color is probably black, like their brethern on the coast and in the neighboring islands, but their faces and their bodies, hair and all, from head to foot, are painted with a mixture of yellow palm oil and red ochre, giving them a red salmon color, and a most unique and singular appearance; inasmuch as when they are seen walking on the shore, the rays of the sun shining upon them, they look like so many animated bronze statues. The climate is said to be unhealthy—indeed, most fatal to European constitutions, but at certain seasons of the year, for several weeks together, the malaria, which conduces to this insalubrity, seems to disappear, and at these times, the temperature, though sultry, is delightful and refreshing, in consequence of the cool breezes which blow inland, and temper the heat which would otherwise be insupportable.

One day young Miller and Lieutenant Ross, accompanied by one of the officers of the *Rapid*, took a fancy into their heads to start off at an early hour in the morning, and penetrate as far into the forest as possible, in hopes of reaching one of the native villages. Consequently, supplying themselves with a few gaudily colored handkerchiefs, glass beads, common clasp knives, and a store of tobacco in the leaf, to give to the natives they might chance to meet, as propitiatory offerings, and arming themselves with pistols, in case of any difficulty arising—although they took care to conceal their weapons, so as not to alarm the natives they might fall in with—they started shortly after sunrise, and entered the forest of brushwood and canes in the rear of the settlement, and were soon completely enclosed by forest trees of immense size, and by parasite shrubs, and compelled to push on in single file over a trodden path, which seemed to have been traced by the natives by their frequent visits to the settlement. For a long time they pushed on, taking care not to lose the forest path, lest they might miss their way altogether, without meeting with any living thing, save the parrots and other tropical birds which flew above their heads, or the monkeys and squirrels that skipped to and fro from branch to branch amongst the trees. At length, after having penetrated, as well as they could estimate, for three or four miles into the solitude of the forest, for their progress was necessarily slow, as they had to make their way oftentimes through tangled brushwood and over fields of prickly cactuses, and occasionally diverging from the trodden path to examine more minutely some gigantic specimen of forest growth, or some singular shrub or flower; and they then had to find their way

back carefully to the beaten track—they reached a stream, the approach to which was heralded by the grateful sound of falling water. Soon they came upon a small lake, so small and trim and neat in appearance, that a very little stretch of imagination might have led them to suppose it an artificial lake in the midst of a gentleman's pleasure grounds. The water looked so cool, so pure, so sparkling to the weary travellers, that they resolved to make this their temporary halting place, and to sit down by its banks and lunch upon the biscuits they had brought with them, and to dilute the small bottle of Jamaica that the English officer had thoughtfully provided, with some of the cool water of the lake. However, as they advanced, they saw that a party of natives were sitting on the bank not more than thirty yards in advance of them. They had come upon them unperceived, having until then been concealed by the trees and the undergrowth. A brief council was held, and it was resolved to endeavor to make their acquaintance, more especially as they presented no very formidable appearance, the party consisting of only one man and two women. As they ventured near, the natives seemed at first to be alarmed, and to be thinking of flight; but the officers made signs of amity, and they remained where they were, and allowed them to approach, only taking the precaution of rising to their feet. It was soon seen that the man was bound on a fishing excursion on the coast, and had brought the women with him—his two wives, doubtless—for the purpose of assisting him in his task, and carrying his fishing gear, consisting of a light wicker-work canoe, borne by the women, and containing spears and baskets of baits, and lines of bark with hard wood hooks, and such like rude materials. Since neither the man nor the women could speak a word of English, or even of Spanish, it was impossible to hold conversation with them; but the man courteously endeavored to explain the use of the spears and the other articles in the canoe, while the women stood by and laughed immoderately, as the officers presumed, at the singularity of their appearance, hampered with the clothing, which the simple natives scorned—both the man and the women being entirely naked, without even any attempt at ornament, as common amongst savages as it is amongst civilized beings, unless the frightful scars cut into their flesh, by way of tattoo, which, covering them from the shoulders upwards, could be intended for ornament or for marks of distinction; yet intended for one or the other, undoubtedly they were. A present of tobacco to the man and of some

glass beads to the women, made friends of them in a moment, and they partook of the biscuits the officers had brought, and furnished them in return with a deliciously cool draught of palm wine, or the inspissated juice of the palm tree, which is produced in great abundance in these islands, and furnishes the favorite beverage of the natives.

After a little time the parties separated, the officers having resolved to reach a village which they understood by signs from the man was only a short distance before them, and the natives going their way towards the coast, the man walking first, a free and independent lord of the creation, and the women tottering along behind him, laden with the canoe and the fishing implements.

Soon the sound of voices, shouting from the tops of the tall, straight palm trees, notified the party of their approach towards the village, and as they approached nearer, numerous bronze-like figures were seen far above the heads of the officers, supported at the very tops of the trees by strong hoops of bark which passed around their bodies and the trees likewise, their knees pressing against the bark, and their backs against the hoop, thus holding themselves securely aloft, having reached their position by gradually wriggling the hoop in an upward direction; a wide clearing was now before the party, in which some hundreds of the natives were basking in the sun. A shout announced their approach, and the women fled to the covert of the forest trees surrounding the clearing, and the officers found themselves in the midst of the male inhabitants of the village. Their sudden appearance seemed to create no alarm; the natives thronged around them good-humoredly, and offered them palm wine to drink, and various fruits to refresh themselves with; but, although disposed to friendship and communicativeness, unfortunately none of them could speak a word of any language intelligible to their visitors. At last an old man was led forward supporting himself by a crutch, who, from the reverence with which he was treated by the assemblage, was evidently either a chief of note or a sorcerer. He was colored with the customary red ochre, and frightfully gashed by the horrible tattoo process; nevertheless there was an appearance of mildness in his features, and his great age, for he was a very old man, inspired confidence and respect. He was led to Lieutenant Ross.

"How do," "Thank you," "Good-bye," "God dam," "*Tambien*," "very well," "*Sacre Tonnere*," "*muchas gracias*,"

poured forth from his lips with wonderful rapidity, testified to his abilities as a linguist, and notwithstanding the strange mixture of phrases, and the equivocal character of some of them, testified also, as the officers supposed, to his amiable desire to extend to them a cordial welcome.

"How do—Very well, thank you," replied the lieutenant, grasping the extended hand of the aged chief. "*Care tobacco V? muchas buono*—oh, very good!" at the same time tendering him a "hand" of leaf tobacco, which he received with every evidence of extreme satisfaction; but unfortunately this was the extent of the conversation that could be carried on—since the vocabulary of the chief extended no further than to the expression of the sentences he had already rehearsed. However, plenty of palm wine was drank, and limes, and guavas, and cocoa nuts presented, as tokens of hospitality, and after resting some time, the party bethought themselves of returning to their vessel. They made signs to be introduced to the women, who, timid as they were, were instinct with the natural curiosity of the daughters of Eve—and could be discovered peeping cautiously out from behind the trees, but this introduction could not be effected, and the salmon-colored beauties remained ensconced in their hiding place.

One singularity they noted, viz., that there appeared to be no huts—the sleeping places of the villagers seeming to be the wicker work canoes, in which they pursued their avocation of fishing, which were here and there slung like hammocks between the trees.

As they were about to leave, a youth came forward with a large basket of limes and plantains, and various peppers for pickling, which he offered for sale to young Miller. It was impossible to carry them to the ship then, but the young midshipman made signs to the lad that if he would bring them to the ship himself on the morrow, he would give him half a dollar, and a lot of tobacco for them. With this bargain the lad appeared satisfied, and the officers went their way, arriving on board the ship in the evening—rather fatigued, yet still pleased with their day's adventure.

On the following morning, probably encouraged by the visit of the preceding day, not only was the lad already mentioned alongside of the ship in his canoe with the limes and plantains, but a score of canoes filled with natives accompanied him, all anxious to dispose of similar stores—and they found a ready market.

Captain P—— was anxious to take some more ballast on

board, as the consumption of provisions and water had considerably lightened the ship, and some stones that lay on a reef at a distance offered the best ballast he could procure. He thought this a good opportunity to obtain it without exposing his crew to the arduous and dangerous task of getting it on board, exposed to the rays of the sun while immersed to the waist in water. A bargain was struck with the natives, who eagerly accepted it, to fill their canoes with ballast from the reef and bring it to the ship, they leaving their vegetables and fruits on board, to receive payment for them when the job was completed.

Away they went to work, and in a short time several canoe loads were brought on board. Several accidents, such as the upsetting of canoes that were loaded, had occurred, but they seemed only to be a source of merriment to the negroes, who immediately righted their fragile craft, and getting on board again, proceeded to refill them, while the crew enjoyed the scene from the decks of the *G*——.

At length a more than usual commotion seemed to take place, in consequence of the upsetting of a canoe, and the voices of the negroes were heard, in wail and lamentation, borne across the water. The canoes were, perhaps, half a mile distant from the ship, and nothing could be seen with the naked eye as to the cause of the unusual disturbance. Spy glasses were, however, put in requisition, and the fins of several sharks were seen above the water, which had been attracted to the spot, probably, by the scent of the naked bodies of the negroes, as they swam around the canoes.

"I fear some accident has happened," said a lieutenant to Captain P——; "the negroes seem to be in a great fluster about something."

"Oh, it's nothing of any consequence, depend upon it," was the reply of the captain. "Those fellows are like fish in the water; they are merely amusing themselves; but I wish they would hasten aboard and let us complete our ballast."

"By heaven! there are sharks all around them!" exclaimed the lieutenant again; "see, doctor," handing his glass to the ship's surgeon.

"Sharks, pooh! nonsense," replied the doctor; "there are only ground sharks hereabouts, and they seldom or never attack human beings in the water." However, he took the glass and peered through it, and then added, "Upon my word, I am afraid something is the matter."

"I have heard," said the captain, "that these ground sharks, though, in general, lazy, lubberly brutes, are more savage than any other species, when awakened from their semi-torpor. They must have been aroused by the noise and clamor of the negroes, and very likely some of the poor devils have fallen victims to their ferocity. Mr. Ross, let a boat be lowered, sir, and take half a dozen hands, and go and see what is the matter."

The boat was lowered with the promptitude always observable on board a man-of-war, and the lieutenant and crew put off to the scene of distress—for that there really was distress, was now plainly apparent; for, ringing clamorously over the water, louder and louder, was heard the wail of the negroes, and the cry seemed to be heard on shore, and understood and responded to, for groups of negroes gathered on the hill-sides, and joined their wail to that of their comrades.

Soon a large double banked canoe was seen to quit the beach, propelled by upwards of twenty paddles, seeming to fly over the water with the swiftness of a bird, rather than to cut its way through it; rapidly it flew past the man-of-war's boat, and in an inconceivably short space of time was at the scene of disaster; and ere the lieutenant reached the spot, the canoe was on its return, followed by all the rest—the wail of distress rising louder and louder as they neared the ship. Soon they were alongside—the larger canoe coming alongside under the ship's counter, beneath the quarter-deck, on which the officers were grouped under the awning.

A piece of torn sail was extended over the stern-sheets of the canoe, which was raised when it came alongside; and as the negroes in the larger canoe raised it, the wail and lamentation burst forth louder than ever, and was again responded to from the shore.

"Oh, my God!" exclaimed the surgeon, who happened at that moment to be looking over the side; and he placed his hands before his face and shuddered.

"What is the matter, Doctor?" inquired young Miller, who was standing near him.

"Look and see for yourself," replied the surgeon, taking the youth by the arm and leading him to the bulwarks. "It is horrible—horrible!"

The young midshipman went to the side and looked over. It was a horrible sight, indeed, that met his gaze and that of a hundred others, who by this time understood that the larger

canoe was the object of attention, and who, perhaps, partially guessed the cause, for extended in the bottom of the canoe, were the lifeless remains of the youth who had sold young Miller the basket of limes in the morning. One of the legs had been severed at the hip, as if chopped off with a hatchet. One of the arms had been taken off, in like manner, a short distance above the elbow, and the entrails had been torn out entirely, so that the interior of the body lay exposed like that of a sheep at the butcher's shambles. The remaining portions of the flesh were torn with the sharp teeth of the sharks, the head alone was untouched, and thus from the features still in death, was the body recognized. Soon the larger canoe, followed by the rest, went on shore, and loud throughout the night rose the wail of the native watchers, and in the morning the body was buried, attended by thousands of natives and numerous officers who were actuated by curiosity and a wish to testify their sympathy in the sorrowful demonstrations of the negroes. All the bits of crape and black cloth that were available were begged by the natives, and worn around their arms in imitation of the officers, whom at different periods they had seen following the body of some messmate, who had fallen a victim to the diseases of the climate ; and for two or three days the funeral ceremonies were continued—watch fires being kept burning during the night—and the lamentations of the women resounding across the water, and echoed by the hills. Simple as was the funeral—rude as were the notions of the poor, ignorant creatures, it was a solemn scene, and calculated to make an impression on the most careless beholder. At all events it was sufficient proof, that, savage as might be the nature of the untutored negroes, they were earnest and unfailing in their respect for the memory of the dead.

After this shocking catastrophe there was no more loading of ballast, and in the course of a few days the G—— prepared for sea ; the Rapid still remained behind ; but the captain came on board the G—— to see his friends off.

"I wonder," said Captain P——, while standing by the side of the English captain, watching the receding shore as the vessel sailed out of the bay, "I wonder if it would be of any use taking another cruise along the coast just now ; perhaps I might meet with better luck than I met with before ?"

"I rather think not," replied the English captain. "The Rapid, in company with the Firefly, has been cruising up and down from Loango to Cape Coast Castle, for some months, in

search of two noted slavers—one the Albatross. I don't know her captain's name, but report says he is a terrible fellow ; the other, the Dolphin, commanded by a renegade Frenchman named Junot, one of the most unmitigated scoundrels that ever breathed, and I much fear—indeed, I feel certain that both have escaped. We captured the Dolphin off the coast, crammed full of slaves—that is to say, the fellow entreated us to cease firing, lowered his flag, and allowed me to send a master's mate on board as prize master. The captain was, of course, put in irons, but my brig was short-handed—I have lost so many of my best men since I have been on this infernal coast—and the crew were wanted to work the prize. We thought there was no danger, especially as there were two of us, of her escape—but the Firefly set sail in chase of the other fellow, and suddenly two or three guns were fired right into my rigging, disabling me so much, and so wholly unexpected was the fire, too, that I was unable for the moment to reply to it, and the confounded brig shot ahead and was clear off in no time. I fired after her, for pursuit in my crippled condition was useless ; but the shot fell short. So, as I have said, I lost one of the best prizes I ever captured. I would have given six months pay to have got hold of that devil incarnate, Junot."

"It was too bad," said Captain P——, "yet the fellow must be a clever scoundrel."

"Clever ; but an arrant coward, so report says."

"And you never saw her again?"

"Saw her again ! Faith, no. She is lying at anchor in Cuba, by this time, I presume. The worst part of the affair was, she went off with my master's mate and six of my best seamen on board ; poor fellows—I wonder what their fate has been ?"

"I should hardly think the fellow would dare to harm *them*," answered Captain P——, "most likely he would treat them well, and put them on shore somewhere."

"I hope so ! but I have my misgivings," replied the Englishman.

"And the Firefly ; did she succeed in the chase?"

"No, she came back about three days afterwards—the Albatross that she was in chase of, sails like a witch ; and besides, they 'hove to' to pick up a poor negress whom I suppose the captain tossed overboard, on purpose to try if the humanity of the captain of the Firefly was greater than his desire to secure a prize."

"And where is the Firefly now?"

"She is gone to Sierra Leone to repair, and I suppose the rescued negress will be sent to Liberia."

"Then you think it would be useless cruising just now along the coast. I must say it is tedious work—unless something is to be gained by it."

"I should say it was. Let the fellows have a few months respite, and then pounce down upon them unawares. I think that would be the best plan; for my part, I have set my heart on capturing this devil Junot; and, although I am entitled to return home, I exchanged with the officer that came to take my place, with the express intention of remaining a few months longer, in the hope of success."

"In that case," said Captain P——, "I shall follow up my intention of visiting the islands. I shall go to St. Thomas and thence to Annabon."

"Oh, by the bye, speaking of Annabon," said the English captain, "that puts me in mind of a little bit of romance connected with that island. My dear fellow, you can't do better than pay a visit to the White Lady of Annabon."

"The White Lady of Annabon!" exclaimed Captain P——. "Who the d—l is she—a ghost or a fairy?"

"Neither the one nor the other, though beautiful and almost ethereal enough to be the latter."

"Who is she, then?"

"That nobody knows. She was only discovered by the captain of one of our cruisers a few weeks since, and I have not seen her yet. I describe her from his description. When I say discovered, I mean that until of late it was unknown that such a being was upon the island, although it appears, from Captain Hall's account, that she must have been residing there for years, and she has quite a splendid establishment."

"Have you no idea, then, who she is?"

"Not the least in the world; although some of these days I mean to pay her a visit, and to endeavor to find her out. I can only surmise that she is the wife, or mistress, or daughter of some pirate or slave dealer, who has managed to keep his treasure there in seclusion for years. It may be so—it may be not. At any rate, it is quite in the style of the corsair and Medora, or Juan and Haidee, isn't it? It's enough to pique a fellow's curiosity."

"It has raised mine to the highest pitch, I can assure you," said Captain P——, "and I shall certainly follow your advice,

and pay the lady a visit—but it isn't all a hoax of Captain Hall's, as you call him?"

"Oh, no; I know Hall too well to fear that. That there is some enchanting embodiment of female loveliness on the island of Annabon, I have no doubt. How she got there, or who she is, are different matters."

The G—— by this time had stretched far from the land, and shaking Captain P—— by the hand, and bidding farewell to the officers, the captain of the *Rapid* returned to the harbor, while the G—— held on her course towards St. Thomas. In the course of a week she reached that island, but did not long remain there, as the captain, excited by what he had heard from Captain Trainer, of the English brig, was anxious to reach Annabon.

He still had the young woman Charlotte Herbert on board, whom, the reader will recollect, he had picked up at sea, after the burning of the *Laurel*. It had been his intention to carry her to Sierra Leone, as the most desirable place to set her on shore. Now a new idea came into his head. If it really turned out that a young white female was residing on Annabon, he would leave the young girl temporarily with her, for he was well aware a ship of war was no place for her to remain on board of.

In due time the G—— reached Annabon, and, to the captain's surprise—although he now began to believe the story a hoax—no such person was known in the settlement, off which ships usually anchored; but, by dint of earnest inquiry, he learnt from some negroes that it was said there was such a being resident on the southern coast, in a secluded bay.

Rendered more curious than ever, the captain resolved to cruise round the island as close to the shore as possible, and one morning his curiosity was gratified by the sight of a cottage different entirely from those usual on the coast, and quite concealed amongst the trees.

The ship was brought to anchor in the offing—the bay was only navigable for small boats: and Captain P—— resolved to send Charlotte Herbert on shore, with one of his officers, as an *avant courier*. "Here, Mr. Miller," he said, after the sails had been furled and the boat lowered, and he had given notice to Charlotte Herbert of his intentions, "you are a smart looking fellow, and, I should judge, ought to make a good squire of dames. Don your best uniform, sir, and accompany Miss Herbert ashore to this fairy lady's abode, and see that you bring

back a good account of yourself. Give the lady my compliments, and say that Captain P——, of the U. S. ship G——, will shortly do himself the honor of waiting upon her ladyship."

The youth would not have desired any pleasanter errand. He was ready and on board the boat in a few minutes. The boat put off from the ship's side, and five minutes' pull carried her into the creek, which was the only visible landing place. The captain watched them from the ship with his spyglass, and saw the young midshipman and Miss Herbert enter the glade, where the foliage of trees and shrubs concealed them from his view.

CHAPTER XVII.

A Surprise and somewhat of a Mystery arising out of the Visit to the White Lady of Annabon, and still more Mystery arising out of the Interview.

FOR years it had remained unsuspected that the lonely island of Annabon contained so lovely a specimen of budding womanhood as the fair Greek bride of the slaver captain, and but for the indiscretion of the young girl, or rather but for the anxious hope that had led her without reflection to signalize a British cruiser, thinking it was the Albatross, as many more years might have passed away without Captain Seymour's secret having been discovered. One morning, about a month before the G—— had entered Clarence Bay, Fernando Po, the British cruiser Alacrity, Captain Hall, sighted the Island of Annabon, while pursuing her course from Ascension to the mouth of the river Gaboon in Biaffra. Curiosity probably tempted the captain to hug the land closely, and as he, in company with the lieutenant of the watch, was gazing upon the shore through his spy-glass, and expatiating upon the beauties of the scenery as creek after creek opened to their view as they rounded the various points, disclosing a panorama of the most enchanting and inviting landscape scenery, the attention of both gentlemen was attracted by the appearance of what seemed to be a white flag flying from a pole on the summit of a hillock whence was a clear vista between the forest trees, from the hill to the sea, forming either an artificial glade of wondrous beauty, or else being one of those natural clearances often found in these

generally thickly wooded islands, to imitate which, would put to the test the skill of the most artistic landscape gardener.

"Bless me!" said the captain, lowering his glass for a moment, and turning to the officer, "that is surely a white flag flying from the summit of yonder eminence; there, between those forest trees in the opening," pointing with his finger in the direction. "Do you see it?"

"I have observed it for some minutes; I thought I saw it hoisted as soon as we rounded the point there," replied the lieutenant; "but as I could not conceive what it could be at first, I did not speak—I wished to be certain that it was really a flag. It is evidently some signal flying. What can it mean?"

"I'm sure I can't say; a white flag; let me see; a single white flag answers to none of our signals, except it be meant for a flag of truce, and that it can't be," replied the captain, smiling at the conceit. "It must have been hoisted purposely to arrest our attention, though, for, as you say, it was not flying when we opened upon the glade. It surely can't be any party from our cruisers who have by some means been left ashore here? However, we'll reply to it, Mr. Thompson. Harley, (calling to a midshipman,) tell the signal man to give you the white flag, and run it up; and brace forward the yards a little, Mr. Thompson, (again addressing the lieutenant) we'll stand in a little closer; the water is deep here close in to the land; and send a boat ashore. Get the gig ready, and put six hands on board her, and you had better go; no, stay, I'll go myself, and solve the mystery."

The vessel was soon as close in shore as it was thought safe to run her, when the captain ordered the main yard to be "laid aback," and descended into the gig, which had already been lowered, and hauled up alongside. In a few minutes she had entered the creek, which formed the landing place, and the captain sprung ashore.

Zuleika, as soon as she had seen the answer to her signal flying from the gaff-end of the cruiser, had quitted the hillock without waiting to scrutinize more closely the appearance of the vessel. Had she done so, after it had drawn nearer the land, she would have perhaps known that it was not the Albatross, and a little reflection might have told her that unless some accident had occurred to render it necessary for her husband's vessel to return, it could not have been the Albatross that had so soon made her re-appearance; but, poor child, she was not used to draw deductions from reflection, and if she had

been, she would probably, in her simplicity, guided by the sentiments of her own impulsive nature, have thought it nothing to be wondered at, if Captain Seymour had returned to bid her again farewell, before he left her for so long a time.

Jane Miller had, however, remained behind for some minutes after Zuleika had descended the hill, and when the vessel's main yard had been thrown "aback," she saw, now the ship was close in shore, that there was some mistake. She hurried after Zuleika, who was running in such breathless haste towards the landing place, that she had nearly arrived in sight of the creek before Jane overtook her.

"There is some mistake ; that vessel is not the Albatross," she said ; and at this moment, the boat having grounded, Captain Hall was seen approaching—"and that is not Captain Seymour," she added, directing Zuleika's attention to the stranger.

The poor girl suddenly stopped, trembling with disappointment and apprehension. The thought struck her that something dreadful must have happened to her husband ; perhaps his vessel had been lost and he was drowned ; and the stranger captain was coming to tell her—for had he not answered her signal ? Jane, who was more conversant with sea usages, endeavored to reassure her, while she placed her arm around the almost fainting girl's waist.

"The signal has been answered, as all such signals would be, even by strangers," said she. "I have been told that there are several men-of-war on this coast. That vessel looks like one to me. I once saw one in New York. The captain has understood the signal as a request to send a boat ashore. He is coming to know what's wanted."

"*Santa Maria !*" exclaimed Zuleika, her alarm now taking another shape ; "what shall we do ?"

"Simply answer the questions he may put, and inform him the flag was hoisted by mistake."

"And say that I took his vessel to be that of my husband," interrupted Zuleika.

"Nay," said Jane Miller, who, with more knowledge of the world than her companion, feared that such an explanation would, perhaps, involve Seymour in difficulty at some future day. "It is very likely the captain does not speak Spanish, or at least, only indifferently, as I do. Say that the flag was hoisted by a mistake, and leave him to infer the rest ; and Zuleika, be careful ; do not betray my disguise."

While this conversation had been going forward, Captain Hall had nearly reached the spot where they stood. He had discovered them almost as soon as they had perceived him.

"A petticoat, by all that's wonderful!" was his rough, sailor-like exclamation. "What can be the meaning of it? I've had the good fortune to fall in with a romantic adventure, at all events. Quite a God-send to relieve the dull monotony of cruising on this infernal coast."

"Observing that the female, whoever she might be, was awaiting his arrival, attended by a young man attired in European costume, he slackened his pace, and walked leisurely towards them—and, as he had subsequently told Captain Trainer, he was perfectly astonished at the loveliness of the island damsel.

As Jane Miller had anticipated, he scarcely spoke or understood a word of Spanish; and having courteously addressed Zuleika in English, to which she, adopting Jane's advice, replied in Spanish, although she was at this time sufficiently acquainted with English to understand him. He turned to Jane, and addressed her in a similar manner. Jane replied also in Spanish—sufficiently good to deceive the captain—but observing the alarm of Zuleika, she endeavored to signify that a mistake had been made in hoisting the flag, and to beg their unexpected visitor to accompany them to the cottage and take some refreshment.

The captain was able to understand this, and nothing loth to obey, he accompanied them to their residence, which he found to be handsomely furnished, and supplied with not only the necessities but the luxuries of life; and situated in the midst of a well cultivated garden, while the books and pictures, and instruments of music scattered about the apartment, showed the intellectual taste of the fair occupant.

The captain was perfectly bewildered, and almost fancied himself the victim of some fairy delusion. He, however, partook of the *material* refreshments offered him, and, after resting for some time, courteously bade farewell to his lovely hostess, and as much bewildered as ever—quite unable to conceive who the beautiful being could be who resided thus in a condition of almost perfect seclusion in this lonely isle—he returned to the boat and ordered the men to pull him on board his vessel. He could only account for what he had witnessed in the manner that he had done to Captain Trainer—viz., by supposing that the lady of the isle was the wife, or more likely the daughter

of some pirate or slaver captain. Thus was effected the discovery of the white lady of Annabon.

The calm, sweet seclusion of Annabon once invaded, its future privacy was doomed. The flower that bloomed upon its soil was too fair to remain hidden from the world's admiration when once its beauties had been noised abroad. Annabon, lovely and lonely island as it was, could no longer afford shelter and security to the dove that whispered peace, and hope, and love to the heart of the wayward Seymour; to her who alone was able to hush the strife of the discordant elements that raged within his breast; to speak peace, and hope, and love, and awaken happiness in the breast of him from whose bosom, but for her softening influence, the hope of happiness would have been forever banished. But of this intrusion into the sanctuary of his love he knew not yet. What was the result of it when he did know it? Time will show.

Both Zuleika and Jane Miller had seen the G—— as she approached the island, and had observed the boat put off from her side, and pull towards the creek; but, warned by the result of former inadvertency, they had made no sign—hoisted no signal of recognition. They awaited at the cottage the result of the visit, which they believed was intended for them, and which they also believed had been caused by the visit of the stranger captain a few weeks before.

Young Miller and Charlotte Herbert found no one, therefore, to meet them when they stepped ashore from the boat; but they perceived the pathway that had been trodden through the woods, hereabouts thinned of trees, but almost impenetrable, save by the pathway, in consequence of the prickly cactuses—the weeds of this country—the cherished exotics of northern climes—which spread themselves in every direction. Following the path, they at length arrived in sight of the little clearing, the plantation, and the cottage. Some negroes approached them, and asked what the strangers wanted; but they could not understand them; they pointed to the cottage and pursued their way. The influence of civilization—perhaps, still more, the influence of the gentle being who had caused the refinement of civilization to find an abiding place amidst these savage solitudes—had rendered the very negroes courteous and kindly. Interpreting the signs made to them, they guided the travellers on their way by the nearest and smoothest paths.

Observing them approach the cottage, and seeing that one of the strange visitors was a female—a strange visitor, indeed,

to the solitudes of Annabon—Zuleika and Jane Miller came forth from the cottage to meet them ; but the latter, to her mingled surprise, joy, and consternation, recognized in the young officer her brother. Her first impulse was to rush into his arms—her next, to fly, and hide herself from his gaze ; but then she thought, “ Since I have been able to deceive Captain Seymour, and even Zuleika, as regards my sex, it is hardly likely *he* will recognize me. My attire, my close-cropped hair, my bronzed complexion, will deceive him likewise.” She hoped they would, and yet, strange contrariety, she felt her heart swell and throb almost to bursting at the thought that her brother—her only brother—should meet her, here, so far distant from those she loved at home, an outcast from her friends by her own actions, a victim of her own mad infatuation—and pass her by unheeded. She could not endure the thought, and she turned aside her head to conceal the tears that, in spite of herself, gushed to her eyes. What would she not have given to have met here, in this distant solitude, her brother, alone ; no one near to witness the interview—to become cognizant of her shame. He was younger than she, but still, as her brother, especially now that he was growing towards man’s estate, she could have looked up to him as a protector.

“ Oh, had I but met him alone,” she murmured, “ I would have confided all to him.”

But she had little need to turn her head away, and hide her gushing tears. The young man had hardly noticed her. He had seen one whom he believed to be a youth of his own age accompany the lady he had been sent to visit, and then his whole attention had been absorbed in the contemplation of the lady’s surpassing loveliness. Thomas Miller was just of that age when the imagination of youth first commences to become susceptible to the influence of female beauty, and he thought that he saw before him the embodiment of all that a poet’s or a lover’s imagination (much the same thing in this regard) could conceive to be the perfection of feminine loveliness—the cold, passionless ideal of the statuary’s art, wrought to perfection from the separate beauties of a dozen models, instinct with life and feeling, and glowing in all her living, breathing, blushing, peerless charms ; and Jane observed this admiration, and a cold chill struck to her heart. It was foolish—she knew her brother had not recognized her—she felt that, as she was now, in the presence of those by whom she was surrounded, she would sooner part from him forever—would sooner die, solitary

outcast as she felt herself to be, than that he *should* recognize her; and yet she felt, bitterly felt, this all-absorbing admiration of a stranger, while she, his lost sister, was so near; and no look, not one searching gaze, not one perplexing doubt upon his features, as he turned towards her, that might lead her to suppose he thought that in the supposed youth before him he recognized his sister's lineaments. Was she then utterly forgotten—cast adrift forever from the affections of those she had abandoned at the dictates of an infatuation that now she shuddered and wondered at? Yet it was as she had but that moment wished it would be—her disguise was complete, her brother knew her not; and still, strange contrariety of human nature, we repeat, she felt as though the agony of soul she suffered were unendurable, as thus she stood—her loss forgotten, her very existence seemingly ignored by him whom, from the days of his earliest childhood, she had nursed, and fondled, and loved with all the devotion of an only sister's love.

The young midshipman knew only a very few phrases of Spanish, which he had picked up at school, and he was using these very much at random, in the endeavor to make himself agreeable to the unknown lady. He appeared quite to have forgotten that he had the duty to perform of introducing Charlotte Herbert; and the young woman, observing the absorption of her escort, smiled to herself, and advanced to the spot where Jane Miller was standing. Perhaps the youth and good looks of the supposed boy interested her; she addressed to Jane a few words in Spanish, with which language she had, during her residence in New Orleans, become slightly acquainted, and extended her hand. Jane took the proffered hand, and smiled faintly, at the same time replying in Spanish; but suddenly she snatched her hand away, as though it had been stung by a scorpion—a convulsive shudder passed through her frame, and her heart seemed to rise in her throat and choke her utterance. Her palm had come in contact with the ring Miss Herbert wore that day on the third finger of the right hand, and she had glanced towards it. It was the counterpart of the ring she had been presented with by Seymour. "Oh God!" she thought, "is this another victim to *his* wiles—am I not alone in my wretchedness?" and then she looked towards the spot where the young midshipman and Zuleika were still engaged in broken attempts at conversation. "Alas!" she murmured, "poor, poor deceived Zuleika!"

Charlotte Herbert knew not what to think of the strange

action of the supposed boy. She imagined he was unwell; and with a look of commiseration she again addressed him; but Jane had turned her back, and walking towards an arbor, near by, she took from her bosom a ring tied to a piece of black silk ribbon. "I could not have lost it," she muttered; "no: and if I had, how could she have found it? it is too true; it must be as I surmise. Here is my ring; I seldom look at it now. Henceforward it is valueless, indeed. Seymour must have given a similar ring to that young woman; but this is folly on my part; poor thing, she too, as well as I, is to be pitied. Strange, too, that *she* should have come *hither*," and recovering in some degree her composure, she returned to Miss Herbert, made some trifling excuse of sudden indisposition, and her resolution not to be recognized by her brother, returning with renewed strength, she walked slowly towards the cottage, leaving Zuleika and her visitors together.

The young midshipman endeavored to make it understood that his captain would shortly pay the lady of the isle a visit, and then leaving Miss Herbert on shore with Zuleika, he went back to the boat and returned on board the vessel.

"Come on board, sir," said the youngster, as after ascending the side of the *G——*, he advanced to the captain, touching his cap with his forefinger.

"So I perceive Mr. Miller," said the captain, "well, sir, and what report have you to make? Where is Miss Herbert?"

"I left her behind, as you desired me to do, sir, if I was fortunate enough to meet with the young lady."

"From which I infer that you have been fortunate enough to do so. Did you deliver my message?"

"Upon my word, sir, I scarcely know whether I did or not. I tried to do so, at any rate."

"What do you mean by that, sirrah?" said the captain, sharply. "You *tried* to deliver my message?"

"As well as I could in Spanish, sir, but I guess my language was something like that of Mr. Ross, when he held the palaver with the old chief at Fernando Po, a sort of mixture of English, bad French, and worse Spanish."

The lieutenant, who was standing near by, turned to the lad, and playfully shook his fist at him. "None of your impertinent allusions to my Spanish," said he, "if you please, Mr. Miller."

"Well, well," continued the captain, "I suppose you made yourself understood?"

"I imagine I did, sir."

"And what sort of a creature is this divinity of the island—this White Lady of Annabon, as Trainer quaintly called her. Some hideous old hag, I suppose, whom the vivid fancy of Captain Hall has persuaded himself is an angel of light. I have known such Quixotic transformations of Dulcineas into Duchesses to occur often, when a man has been six months out of sight of a petticoat."

"Sir!" said the youth, in a tone of such apparent astonishment at the captain's irreverence, that the latter, as well as the lieutenant, smiled.

"Why, young gentleman," said the captain, "you are surely not smitten with the charms of this island beauty, are you? Beware, youngster. Keep the fate of Don Juan in remembrance, and beware how you give way to the influence of the charms of this African Haidee, or perhaps you may find a second Lambro in her father or lover, or, perchance, her husband. But, describe the enchantress of the isle, boy. What is she like?"

"The most lovely creature I ever saw—ever imagined," said the youth. "If Powers' Greek Slave could step from her pedestal imbued with life, she would be nothing to compare with her. No, nor yet the Medicean Venus either, let alone the wax-work beauty in Barnum's Museum."

Again the captain and lieutenant laughed, and this time heartily. At length the captain said—

"A sad descent from your heroics, that lame termination of your comparison, Mr. Miller. A step from the sublime to the ridiculous with a vengeance. However, you have raised my curiosity, and I shall fulfil my intention of paying this extraordinary beauty a visit. I was thinking of taking you on shore again; but I am afraid you will lose your wits altogether, if I again expose you to the Circean wiles of the island enchantress."

"I hope you will not alter your intention, sir," said the youth, again touching his cap.

"Well, well," exclaimed the captain, "I see you are resolved not to take warning. Into the boat with you then. Mr. Ross (addressing the lieutenant) order the crew into the boat again, sir. I shall be back in the course of an hour."

"Aye, aye, sir," said the lieutenant; and then he added—"My curiosity has been so much excited that I should really like to accompany you on shore, in order to gratify it, Captain P——, if you have no objection."

"None in the least, Mr. Ross," said the captain—"Tell Mr. Roberts to take charge of the deck and come along."

Again the boat landed with the new visitors, and the captain and lieutenant were conducted to the house by the young midshipman. They found Miss Herbert seated with Zuleika, and already on very good terms apparently, endeavoring to converse in a mixture of broken Spanish and English, but Jane Miller had disappeared.

The captain and Mr. Ross were introduced rather through the medium of Miss Herbert than by young Miller. Both were astonished and charmed with the beauty of the island recluse.

"By Jove!" said Captain P——, aside, to the lieutenant, "Captain Trainer had reason to eulogize the White Lady of Annabon. Who *can* she be? and how did she get here? I should much like to know, and yet it would be rude to ask, even if she would inform us. She seems to be quite alone amongst these rude negroes."

"There was a lad with her when I first came ashore," interposed young Miller, "who seemed to be on pretty familiar terms with her too; a rough looking chap, dressed like the cabin boy or steward of some merchantman. But I have not seen him this time."

"He is a very good looking, nay handsome lad," interrupted Miss Herbert; "but he has retired. The lady intimates that he is unwell."

"You may think him handsome," said the young midshipman; "but for my part I thought him the most ungainly cub I had ever seen."

"Take care, youngster," said the captain, laughing; "a little while ago, I feared that you had fallen in love with the divinity of this island, and now you are quarreling with Miss Herbert, because she happens to admire a youth of about your age. Really, one would think you wished to engross the admiration of both ladies yourself."

This conversation had been carried on, in a low voice, while Zuleika sat on an ottoman, at a short distance. She seemed ill at ease, and anxious that her visitors should take their departure, and observing this, the captain and lieutenant rose

to take their leave. Miss Herbert and the young midshipman, of course, following their example.

At this moment a negro attendant entered the room and whispered in the ear of Zuleika.

"Will you be seated for a moment?" she said in Spanish, which request was translated by Miss Herbert.

Of course the party resumed their seats and in the course of a few minutes Zuleika returned with a handsome bouquet of flowers which she presented to the captain, who thanked her and bade her farewell. She glanced meaningly at Miss Herbert, who fell behind the party and walked with her to the entrance of the plantation surrounding the cottage.

"The bouquet was but an excuse to gain time," she said to Miss Herbert. "Here are two letters, one for you and one for that young gentleman," pointing to young Miller. "They have been written while I was away on the pretext of getting the flowers—keep it secret that you have got them, and do not read them till you get on board your ship." Utterly astonished as she was at this strange termination of a strange visit, Miss Herbert, of course, gave the required promise, and bidding Zuleika farewell, she hastened to rejoin the party.

"Well, Miss Herbert," said Captain P——, "has this fairy queen been bestowing her confidence upon you? Can you enlighten us at all, as to who she is, and how she came to be a recluse upon this island?"

"I cannot, sir," said Miss Herbert. "I did endeavor to make some inquiries while I was left alone with her, but she evaded them and seemed displeased; so I did not press them; besides, sometimes we could with difficulty understand each other."

"Well, I adhere to my already expressed supposition regarding her," said the captain, as he stepped into the boat.

"She certainly is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld," said Lieutenant Ross.

"Hilloa, Ross—what! you smitten too?" exclaimed Captain P——, "why, that's a worse case than that of Mr. Miller. Suppose I write word to Mrs. Ross. What'll she say, when the G—— gets home again?"

The lieutenant smiled, and replied, "Oh don't be alarmed, sir, I can admire beauty without betraying my fealty to my wife."

"I hope so," said the captain, in a jocosé tone of voice; "but upon my word, Ross, if I were in your wife's shoes, I



ZULEIKA IN HER COTTAGE AT ANNABO.

"Of course the party resumed their seats and in a few minutes Zuleika returned with a handsome bouquet of flowers which she presented to the captain, who thanked her and bade her farewell. She glanced meaningly at Miss Herbert, who fell behind the party and walked with her to the entrance of the plantation surrounding the cottage."



shouldn't like you to pay too frequent visits to this paragon of beauty."

The boat reached the vessel, the captain, officers, and crew, with Miss Herbert, ascended the side ; the boat was hoisted in, the main-yard squared, and the ship held in her course.

Miss Herbert, to the astonishment of young Miller, placed the letter she had received for him, which was sealed while hers was open, in his hand, the first opportunity she had to do so unperceived, saying archly, "From the fair lady of Annabon to Mr. Miller."

She then sought her own cabin to read her letter—her curiosity to know the contents of the mysterious epistle being of course greatly excited.

She read it, and her astonishment was redoubled. It was written in a delicate female hand, and ran as follows :

"Lady, whoever you may be, trust not to him who gave you the ring you wear; he has deceived me and another as well as me. He has caused my utter alienation from all whom I have hitherto held dear ; and I fear he has deceived and betrayed another, who is too innocent and guiltless to distrust him. If he has not done so already, he *will* betray you. I know not whether you are on board the man-of-war with the intention of seeking him ; but if so, I tell you, he has gone home to America. I will not say what he is for the sake of the innocent being of whom I have spoken, I would not injure him; but, be sure of this, he is not what he represents himself to be. It is not the peaceful occupation of the merchant service he follows—nor is he engaged in duties of the national service—you can make your own comments—I have but done my duty in warning you.

"One who has loved and been deceived and betrayed, as I fear you have."

Again and again did Charlotte Herbert peruse this singular note. "What can she mean ? to whom or to what can she allude. *He* who gave me this ring ! (looking at the ring upon her finger.) '*He is not what he seems,*' perhaps in one sense, he is not ; in one sense I know too truly he is not. '*He is not in the peaceful merchant service, nor yet engaged in the honorable duties of the national service.*' Well, I know he is not. '*One who has loved and been deceived and betrayed as, I fear, you have.*' Ha ! yes, there lies the key to these mysterious warnings—yes, poor girl ! *she* has been deceived and betrayed and driven

to insanity, and perhaps imprisoned on this lone island. That is her secret history, at least the outline of it; perhaps there is a darker mystery beneath its surface.

"Shall I show this letter to captain P——? No, it would answer no purpose; besides I must recollect he knows nothing of *my* history, other than that I was picked up when at the point of death, by him—after the awful catastrophe on board the ill-fated Laurel. I should like, however, to know what the poor creature could have to say to Mr. Miller. Poor thing! I thought my own sorrows hard enough to bear; but thank heaven my intellect has been spared me. So young, too, and so exquisitely beautiful."

Miss Herbert folded up her letter, placed it in her pocket, and went on deck to breathe the cool air of the evening, as the vessel was slowly sailing along the land, for the wind was light, and the island of Annabon was still in sight to leeward.

Let us now discover what was contained in the letter that had been delivered to young Miller. His first thought when the letter was placed in his hand by Miss Herbert, was a very vain and simple one; but after all, a very natural one to a youth of his age; who, to tell the truth, was somewhat proud of his own good looks.

"So that beautiful creature has fallen in love with me, I guess, or else why should she send me a letter? Well, if I thought so, I'd leave the ship if I could, and get ashore on the island, and live with her always. What a happy life it would be! Nobody to think of but ourselves—nothing to do but to make love to each other continually. I don't wonder at the stories I have heard of sailors running away after the island beauties of the South Seas, and giving up everything for their sakes—that is to say, if they are only half as beautiful as this White Lady of Annabon, as they call her; but of course it isn't to be expected that anybody can be so perfect as she is. I wish my watch on deck was over. My fingers itch to open the letter now, on deck; but I am determined to wait and enjoy it all to myself in the gun-room. I am sure I shall dream of that girl all the watch below—that is, if I get any sleep at all. Heigh-ho! I now begin to experience the truth of that at which I have so often laughed, the torment of being in love; I've often thought I've been in love; but I never felt what love really was until I saw that girl to-day. I wonder who she is? and how she came to be on the island? Perhaps carried there against her will, on account of her beauty. What

a gallant thing it would be to rescue her and carry her off. Perhaps she explains in the letter. The watch is nearly out—I've a good mind to go below ; I don't think I shall be wanted or missed from the deck, for I really cannot bear this suspense much longer."

Thus, in disconnected thoughts, soliloquized the boy of sixteen, elated with the idea of having gained the affections of the most beautiful being he had ever seen or dreamed of ; and casting a cautious glance around, and seeing the lieutenant of the watch leaning lazily against the bulwarks, and none of the officers observing him, he resolved to anticipate the end of the watch, and to go below. His foot was already on the rounds of the ladder, when he heard the voice of the captain, who had just come up from his cabin, shouting " Mr. Miller."

" Here, sir," said the youth, hastily retracing his steps, and concealing the letter which he had withdrawn from his pocket.

" Jump up aloft, Mr. Miller, and take a spy-glass with you, and sweep the horizon, and let me know if there are any ships in sight—your eyes are good, especially, look well along the shadow of the land."

" Aye, aye, sir," replied the youthful aspirant to naval honors, compelled to obey and to assume an alacrity he did not feel, and the letter was again placed in his pocket, and in another minute he was aloft and busily engaged in the—at this time—somewhat annoying duty.

" Do you make out anything ?" shouted the captain from the deck.

" Nothing, sir."

" That will do, then ; you can come down. What o'clock is it Mr. Roberts ?" addressing the officer of the watch.

" Just eight bells, sir. I am going to order the watch to be called."

The watch below was called ; the watch on deck relieved, and at length the young midshipman found the long-coveted opportunity to read the letter he had so strangely received. As he opened the envelope a small package fell from the letter to the deck ; he let it lay for the present. The hand was evidently disguised, for the formation of the letters varied considerably, and the first thought of the youth, as he opened the letter, was, " What a pity so beautiful a creature should write such a clumsy hand. I can hardly spell it out ; however, let's see what she says—

" ' You have this day seen the sister whose absence may have

caused much grief to you and to her mother; and yet, perhaps, you have already forgotten her, for you gazed upon her and did not recognize her. Is she so much altered? Is her disguise then so perfect? Perhaps it was well it was so, and yet had there been one sign of recognition, she would have thrown her arms around your neck, and embraced you; though her plans would have been frustrated, and to your feelings as well as to hers, the *expose* might have been painful'——

"Hilloa! What the d—l's the meaning of this?" exclaimed the youngster, who had already become initiated into certain sea expletives more expressive than euphonious. "Does that little witch mean to insinuate that she's my sister?" I wish she was—no I don't, though—I'd sooner she was my cousin, or something of that sort. But then she says, '*Is her disguise so perfect?*' That's a little *too* much gammon, by Jove! Does she think that she's going to make me believe that Jane—and poor Jane's a pretty girl, too—could effect so complete a metamorphosis as that? Why, Jane's two inches taller, and stouter, and has dark hair, and features entirely different. No, no—I'm not quite such a simpleton as to be taken in that way. But let's see what more the little gipsy has to say. * * *

'There was no occasion for you to have endeavored to speak in a foreign language, of which you are almost entirely ignorant (very complimentary, certainly); for, had you spoken English, you would have been, of course, better understood. (The d—l! How provoking of the little witch. She understands English, and kept me jabbering a parcel of nonsense in a language I hardly know a dozen words of. I dare say she was laughing at me all the time she was pretending to look so serious. Just like the girls, that.) However, it was better as it was. All is over; perhaps we shall never meet face to face again. (We shall, if I can manage it.) I have been induced to write because I wish you to let my mother, OUR mother know, and to reveal the fact to her alone, that I am living, and in good bodily health. (There she is again—off at a tangent. What the mischief can she mean? She's not my sister—I know that well enough—and yet she must know all about our family affairs. However, let me read to the end.) And now, dear brother, perhaps I now call you so for the last time (Ah! why didn't she say that when I was ashore—I'd have taken a kiss for that, at any rate; but then, what humbug! 'dear brother,' as if she really expected me to believe her. Where was I? ah!) for the last time. Pray keep this a secret from every

one. *Let no one know WHERE you have met me—not even OUR mother. Some day we MAY meet again; if not, faremell. My prayers and good wishes shall follow you wherever you may wander——*’ and that’s all,” exclaimed the youth, as he finished the perusal of the letter. “That beats cock-fighting—*our mother!* Why, she’s no more like Jane than Miss Herbert is. Poor Jane! I wish I had met her. But how the *d—l* could she know any thing about me? She can’t surely be Jane! No, to be sure she isn’t—unless she’s been transmogrified by some enchanter whose island she has invaded, or is an enchantress herself, like Ariel in the ‘*Tempest*.’ It’s almost enough to make a fellow believe in such things, to see such a creature as she living by herself in this out of the way part of the world. Halloa! what’s this that has fallen from the envelope?” continued the youth, now recollecting the package that had fallen to the deck, and picking it up, he untwisted the paper, which contained some solid substance. “What! by all that’s wonderful! here’s the ring my mother had upon her finger when I left home—the very same ring—with the first letter of Jane’s name engraved inside.” (The youth had never seen the ring worn by Miss Herbert, and alluded to in the former letter, as she had only put it on her finger when going ashore, and had removed it on her return on board.) “Well, that caps the climax,” continued he, drawing a long breath; “that’s a poser, at any rate; there’s some magic about it, that’s certain. I’ll believe any thing now. What’s this inside the paper? ‘*A proof, for my mother, that I am still living. Tom, give it to her, and tell her to wear it for my sake.*’ I wonder whether I’m awake or dreaming,” said the lad, as he stood in a state of bewilderment, alternately contemplating the ring and the letter. “I’ll put it in my pocket, at all events, and see if I can find it there in the morning. Perhaps it may take a journey back again across the Atlantic. Well, I can make nothing of it. Either I’m mad, or the little fairy on the island is mad, or we are all under the influence of enchantment together. I shall turn in;” and the youth sprang into his hammock, and was soon sound asleep. When the watch was called, his first thought was to look for the letter and the ring. He thought he had been dreaming—but no, both were in his pocket. He went on deck, resolving to say nothing about the matter at present to any one. During the day Miss Herbert, whose curiosity had been as much excited as had young Miller’s, and who had been almost equally as much puzzled to understand

the allusions in her letter, sought an opportunity of speaking to the youth, and playfully asked what news he had from the lady of Annabon.

"News," said the youngster in reply, "why she's either mad or bewitched, or is making a fool of me, one or the other. I don't want to hear anything more about her."

"Yes," thought Miss Herbert, turning away. "It is evident the poor creature's mad; and yet there seems a 'method in her madness.' I do wonder who she is, and how she came to be placed in that singular position."

From that period until the G—— went into Sierra Leone, where Miss Herbert was put on board a vessel bound to New Orleans, the "White Lady of Annabon" was a frequent subject of joke and jest amongst the officers; it was noticed that young Miller did not like to jest upon the subject, and for that very reason he had to bear still more frequently the rude jokes of his companions.

He wrote home to his mother and uncle from Sierra Leone, saying nothing, however, to the former with regard to his adventure at Annabon; but in his letter to his uncle he mentioned the visit to the island, and spoke of a very beautiful girl who had lately been discovered to be living there, who he said, jokingly, had set half the captains and officers on the station crazy.

Let us now shift the scene for a few moments before we wind up this present chapter, and return to the other side of the Atlantic.

Seymour having sold his cargo and settled his affairs, left his ship in Bahia, to which place he had sailed from Aracati, and paid a visit to Mr. Mordant in New York. There he remained for a considerable time, mingling as usual in the gayeties of the city—still, as ever, the admiration of the ladies and the envy of the beaux. At length the time arrived for him to leave for the purpose of rejoining the Albatross. He was to start on another voyage to the coast of Africa, and he was busily engaged settling affairs relative to the voyage with the merchant, for a day or two previous to his departure. On the last day of his stay, while he was actually closeted with the merchant, a packet of letters, which had just arrived from Sierra Leone, were brought in by a servant. One by one Mr. Mordant took them and read them. At length he lighted upon the one from his nephew.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, "a letter from my nephew Tom. By-

the-by, Seymour, I did not tell you. My nephew, Thomas Miller, has got a midshipman's berth on board the G——, and they have sent the boy to the coast. Let's see what the youngster says :” and Mr. Mordant read the letter. He laughed when he came to the account of the recluse of Annabon, and read the paragraph aloud to Seymour, saying when he had finished it, “Have you ever heard of or seen this paragon of perfection, Seymour?”

“No,” said the latter, abruptly. He had started and clenched his teeth and knit his brows, while Mr. Mordant had been reading ; but the merchant had not observed him. Now, however, he noticed that he looked pale.

“You are unwell Seymour?” said he.

“I don't feel very well ; the room is too warm. I will wish you good morning, Mr. Mordant ; the air will revive me ; I have a slight headache ;” and shaking the merchant's hand he left the house.

“D——tion. Ten thousand curses on the meddling fools !” he exclaimed, hissing the words through his teeth, as he walked towards his lodgings. “So they have found my nest, have they. Let them beware how they meddle with it. Now, I must indeed be off to sea immediately.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

Junot's diabolical Vengeance—A Pampero disables the Slaver, which is captured by a Cruiser, and Junot and his crew are carried to Sierra Leone to take their Trial.

“Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for one acre of barren ground. Long heath—brown furze—any thing !”—*Tempest*.

“By Gar, we have taught dem a lesson dey shall not easily forget. Go aloft, Senor Paez, and see if you shall perceive de dam cruiser. It shall soon be dark, and I should like to be sure dey is out of sight before de night closes in.”

“*Si, Senor. Diabolo !* but the Englishman found he had caught a Tartar,” was the reply of the person addressed as Senor Paez, as he took a spy-glass from the brackets in the companion way, and went hastily aloft.

“On deck there,” shouted he ; “I think, Senor Capitano, I can just make out the line of the cruiser's top-masts, but I am

not sure. I fancy she is so thoroughly crippled that we have little to fear from her. Another half hour and we shall be out of sight altogether."

"*Bon ! c'est bon ça ! mais diable !* it was a narrow chance, though. *Descendez vous ;* come down, Senor Paez. I think we need be under no further alarm."

The officer thus addressed came down from aloft and joined his superior on the quarter deck.

The above conversation was carried on on board the Dolphin, after the lucky escape of that vessel from her captors, related in a preceding chapter. The reader is already aware that the officers and crew of the Dolphin comprised men of almost every nation, and though the orders relating to the navigation of the vessel were generally given in English, a running fire of sentences and expletives, alternately given in French, English, and Spanish, characterized the usual conversation of the crew, insomuch that a stranger, suddenly finding himself on board the slaver, would have been under the impression that the owners had manned and officered the vessel from the Tower of Babel.

It was a fine starlight night ; all possible sail was set, and studding sails spread alow and aloft, for the wind had veered around to the eastward, and was blowing a fine six knot breeze, and Captain Junot and his *contremaître* were in high spirits at having escaped so fortunately from under the guns of the man-of-war.

"What is your pleasure, Senor, with regard to those devils the Englishman put on board as a prize crew?" asked Paez of the captain.

"*Ah ! diable.* I had forgotten them. Bring the dogs up from the hold. How many of our crew are hurt?"

"Two were killed by the English sailors, while endeavoring to seize and overpower them, and one more severely hurt."

"Ha! who are they?"

"Peters and Bruneau are killed, and the negro Quashy will hardly live till daylight in the morning."

"Three of our best men," said the captain. "Go, fetch the dogs up, and I will interrogate them," he added savagely, and the mate retired to obey the order.

Captain Junot stood leaning against the railing of the quarter deck, gazing savagely, and still with an air of exultation, upon the water, as it seemed to flash with phosphorescent light past the vessel.

In a few minutes the *contremaître* reappeared up the hatchway, accompanied by two seamen as ferocious looking as himself, and followed by the master's mate and the six English sailors, pale and weak from the loss of blood from the severe wounds they had received in the struggle that had been made to overpower them, their faces and clothing stained with the sanguinary tide, and so heavily ironed that it was with difficulty they could drag their limbs along to the quarter deck.

As they emerged, one by one, from the hatchway, savage and sinister glances were cast upon them by a score of villainous countenances, and as they passed the booby hatch, upon which, covered over with canvas, lay the bodies of the dead pirates, several harsh voices hoarsely muttered, "Blood for blood. The plank, the plank! Throw the cursed hounds overboard to the sharks!"

It seemed doubtful, even, whether they would reach the quarter deck, without the vengeance of the savage crew anticipating the judgment of their no less savage commander. Desperate wretches clustered round them, and the glitter of knives could be discerned amidst the semi-darkness, for the brief twilight of the tropics had already almost flitted away, and the stars which had for the previous half hour faintly shone in the clear sky, now sparkled brilliantly in the dark azure vault of heaven—but Paez, who was a man of gigantic stature and of immense physical power, dealt severe blows with his fist upon those who approached nearest, and the men held back, muttering dark and deadly curses between their teeth.

"Back with ye, men—back, I say! If another offers to interfere with the course of justice, by the holy Virgin, I'll send him to h—l before his time. You shall have justice, men, and Peters and Bruneau shall be revenged; but it must be meted out formally by the captain. Here are the prisoners," added Paez, addressing the captain.

Captain Junot looked up from the water and glanced at the captives; his small bloodshot eyes, gleaming like coals of fire from beneath his heavy, ragged, grizzled eyebrows. There was a demoniacal ferocity in his steady gaze, which foretold the doom of the wretched prisoners before he spoke. Their blood ran chill with horror; but they endeavored to bear themselves bravely, and to maintain an appearance of outward composure—though one or two of them were so exhausted with loss of blood that they reeled like drunken men as they stood before their savage captor.

"You are the officer of the party, I see by your attire?" said the captain, after he had silently gazed at the prisoners for some moments, addressing the master's mate, whose name was Richards.

"I am," replied the young man.

"What death do you deserve to die, dog, for having caused the death of two of my best hands?"

"The men were killed by us in self-defence and in the fulfilment of our duty," boldly replied the officer.

"Ha! so you think, perhaps; but men entertain different ideas of duty. What was it to you or your cursed captain, that we were engaged in the slave trade? What right have you to make or meddle with us?"

"The right that justice and humanity bestows," replied the young man.

"*Bah!* Don't talk to me of justice and humanity. You shall have justice meted out to you shortly. As to humanity, it is only fool's talk. Two of you must die, to revenge the death of two men of my crew who have fallen by your hands, and if the negro Quashy dies, so surely shall another of you suffer death; but on one condition I will save *your* life, as the officer of the party. Inform me of every particular relative to the number and strength of the cruisers, English and American, that are upon the coast."

"I will accept of no conditions from you or such as you," said the officer boldly, though his heart shrunk within him as he spoke, for he was a young man of scarcely twenty years of age, and life was dear to him, and his future career brilliant with the high hopes and anticipations of youth; but, he felt that he had his duty to perform as an officer and an example to show his unfortunate companions—he felt that to accept conditions for his life from a pirate, would be to tarnish his honor forever, and then that death were preferable.

"Hound, do you dare to taunt me thus," said the captain savagely, and he stepped forward and struck the youth across the mouth with the hilt of his cutlass, "take that, and learn to keep a civil tongue in your head."

A murmur of savage applause was heard from the lips of the seamen who were looking on, as they witnessed this brutal act of the captain's.

"Strip off the fellow's jacket and search his pockets; perhaps he has papers or letters with him that may be of service," said Captain Junot, whose passion was now roused to demoniacal fury.

A couple of seamen threw themselves upon the unfortunate youth and bore him to the deck ; his jacket was stripped off and searched, but nothing was found.

A locket suspended from his neck, which had hitherto been concealed by his vest, attracted the attention of the captain. "What is that?" said he. "Pull it off." It was done, and the locket containing a lock of hair and the portrait of a dark-blue eyed girl, was given into the monster's hands by his ready satellites.

"Ha! ha! a pretty piece of goods. I wish I had her here," exclaimed the captain, and then throwing the trinket upon the deck he crushed it beneath the heel of his heavy sea boot.

"Now, dog of an Englishman, will you sue for your life?" demanded the brutal pirate chief, compelling the youth to rise to his feet.

"Never," responded the young officer.

"Then take that," exclaimed the captain, dealing a heavy blow with the edge of his cutlass, which he had drawn from the scabbard, upon the unprotected head of the youth!

The blade sunk deep into the skull of the unhappy captive, cleaving it in twain; there was a groan of mortal agony, a horrible crushing sound, and the dead body fell heavily to the deck, amidst the pool of blood which had gushed in torrents from the frightful wound.

"Heave the carrion overboard," said the captain, and the order was promptly obeyed.

"Now, dogs that you are, you see what justice I deal out," said the captain, whom the sight of blood appeared to have driven to insanity. "Mark the sign of the cross upon your foreheads with that blood, and swear to embrace our trade, and your lives shall be spared, all but two—two must die to avenge the deaths of my own men; but for that you shall cast lots. What say you?"

"Never," feebly responded the unhappy men, for they were sick with horror at the sight they had witnessed.

"Your blood be upon your own hands, then," exclaimed the Captain—and the men who had gradually crowded closer and closer upon the quarter deck, murmured in harsh, savage voices, "blood for blood."

"Sailmaker," shouted Captain Junot, "are the dead men's hammocks ready and shotted?"

"All ready, sir," responded the sailmaker—a Portuguese seaman whose complexion was bronzed to the color of a negro.

"Then, Senor Paez, take two of these men and place them back to back with the dead bodies of Peters and Bruneau, and sew them up in the hammocks, and when you are ready throw them overboard—and carpenter (shouting to that functionary) rig the plank—the other four shall walk overboard. *Ma foi!* but the sharks shall have a feast to-night."

Two of the unfortunate seamen, unable to offer any resistance, were seized by the wretches of pirates and bound back to back—living men with the corpses of the dead—and the hammocks being sewed around them, heavily shotted, they were laid, struggling with mortal terror, near the gangway.

The "plank," meanwhile, had been rigged by the carpenter and his willing assistants. It was a smooth piece of board, about eight feet long, which was accurately balanced and secured by a tackle across the gangway. A weight of about a hundred pounds was fastened to the end which hung in-board; so that until the weight of a man's body approached the outward extremity, it would not top over. This plank was raised by some of the crew, and the two hammocks, with their dead and living freight, were launched from it into the deep. Pale with horror, the unhappy remnant of the captives witnessed this frightful scene, and stood silently awaiting their turn, for they felt that any appeal for mercy from the demons in human form by whom they were surrounded, would be in vain; but the scene of hellish horror was not yet ended; it needed yet some further embellishment of Pandemoniacal cruelty.

"Bring Quashy from his hammock," shouted the captain, and the negro, his usually black complexion changed to a sickly yellow—frightful to look upon, and his features distorted with pain, was brought up and supported by two of his negro mess-mates in a position to view the tragedy that was being enacted.

"Now, men," said Captain Junot, addressing his brutal crew, "and you, too, Quashy; see how I avenge any injury offered to you. Peters and Bruneau have been revenged, Quashy; these others die to satisfy your vengeance. Draw out two boarding-pikes" (addressing two seamen who stood near him).

The sharp instruments were brought from the row which glittered in the bracket around the mainmast.

"And now, dogs," said the captain to the hapless seamen, "walk that plank. What! you won't. Then drive them with the pikes," added the captain to the two seamen who held the

weapons in their hands ; and the sharp points of the pikes were applied to the backs of the wretched, hapless captives, until they shrieked with agony, while the blood coursed in streams from the wounds. Goaded to desperation, the half-maddened seamen—to whom a speedy death was now the greatest mercy—stepped upon the fatal plank, and walked to the opposite end ; it tilted with their weight, and in another moment, amidst the shouts, and taunts, and jeers of the demon crew, they were lurched into the yielding waters ; the irons fastened to their legs bore them down, the waters closed above them, and the ship passed on ; and the stars shone forth as clearly, and the water sparkled as brilliantly with the phosphorescent light as though no such deed of horror had happened.

“Get water and wash these stains of blood from the deck,” said the captain ; but the *contremaître* directed his attention to the negro, who had been torn from his hammock to witness the consummation of the foul tragedy. He was dead in the arms of his supporters.

“Throw him overboard with the rest,” said the captain, laughing brutally, “he is only a negro, after all, and he has been revenged.”

And the body of Quashy plashed into the water and floated past, bobbing up and down in the wake of the vessel, for no shot had been fastened to *him*.

A murmur of disapprobation arose from the negro portion of the crew ; but they comprised a minority and were held in subjection by the rest, and they were soon quieted.

Captain Junot descended to his cabin with the air of a man who had carried out a decree of justice. Thus were the fears of Captain Trainer, of the *Rapid*, verified, and the expectations of Captain P——, that the slaver captain would not dare to treat the captives with cruelty, proved faulty. Few men can conceive the condition of utter callousness to human suffering that the hearts of those engaged in the slave trade are inured to.

It was the *contremaître's* watch on deck, and Captain Junot, having descended to his cabin after the enactment of the horrid cruelties we have described, poured out a tumbler half full of brandy, and drinking it off at a draught, threw himself upon a sofa and was soon in a heavy slumber, which continued until the watch was relieved at midnight.

But a change of scene had taken place overhead, although no symptom of the change was apparent in the cabin, save that

the sound of the water was no longer heard plashing against the sides as the ship gallantly ploughed her path through the yielding element. All was hushed, silent, ominously still, and although the stern windows of the cabin were open, the heat was oppressive, and almost stifling, for no longer the cooling breeze rushed in from the ocean. The captain glanced out of the cabin windows, and then seemed to awaken to the presence of some approaching evil. With an oath upon his lips he rushed upon deck. The vessel was lying motionless upon the water; her sails flapping heavily and lazily against the mast, but none of them taken in. The stars which had beamed so brightly from the dark azure canopy of heaven upon the late scene of blood and horror, had vanished, and the sky was as dark as pitch; a lead-colored haze, so dense as to seem almost palpable, pervaded the atmosphere, and the ocean had lost its late phosphorescent brilliancy, and became dark and turgid. The watch had been relieved before the change had occurred, although it was not yet a quarter of an hour past midnight; but in these latitudes the changes come on suddenly; the mate in charge of the deck—who had never before visited the coast, having been shipped in Havana on a recommendation from a slave merchant, on account of his reckless ferocity (he had for some years pursued the career of a pirate in the Greek Archipelago)—had failed to take warning by the change—while the crew, stretched here and there about the decks, under the lee of the bulwarks, soundly sleeping, or listlessly lounging over the railing of the vessel, were gazing carelessly and thoughtlessly into the dark water.

"*Mon Dieu! Sacre mille tonneres; mais nous aurons un veritable pampero!*" exclaimed Captain Junot, and cursing the apathy of the officer in charge, he ordered that all hands should be called immediately, and sail taken in as rapidly as possible.

The pamperos, or hurricanes peculiar to the coast of Africa, like the typhoons of the East Indies, come on suddenly, only giving warning by the wind dying away and the sky and the sea assuming an ashy hue, while the atmosphere becomes oppressive in the extreme. This ominous calm is the precursor of torrents of rain, followed by terrific squalls of wind, accompanied by thunder and lightning of the most startling and vivid description. It is customary in such cases, when there is plenty of sea room, to take in all possible sail, and allow the ship to run directly before the gale, which sometimes lasts but

an hour or two ; although, when the pampero is of unusual violence, it endures for as many days.

There was still hope that before the rain came on there might be time to clew up the sails, and all hands were now fully aroused to the critical nature of their position. The negro boys were ordered aloft to furl the royals and take in the topgallant studding sails, the topgallant sails were clewed up, and the topsail halyards let go by the run, preparatory to being furled ; when a strange rushing sound, like that of a cataract that had been dammed up, suddenly broken loose, and precipitated with resistless fury over a valley beneath, was heard to the northwestward ; then came a vivid flash of lightning, and a peal of deafening thunder, and the cry arose from a score of voices at once, "The pampero—the pampero is upon us!"

The order was given to put the vessel before the wind, which was expected to come from the quarter whence the sound of the approaching rain and the first peal of thunder had been heard ; but the ship was too much encumbered with sail, and the wind, almost as soon as the first heavy rain-drops pattered upon the deck, burst upon them with such violence that it was found impracticable to obey the order. The ship would not answer her helm, the waves rose as rapidly as the wind, and the vessel was thrown into the trough of the sea.

"Aloft there! you lazy, lubberly, black rascals—bear a hand and furl those royals," shouted the captain, through his speaking trumpet. "Hurry, men, hurry—roll up the sails—cut, cut them adrift with your knives if you cannot furl them," he added, his voice rising to a shrill shriek, as he repeated his orders—the danger becoming every moment more imminent ; but his shouts were unheard—had they been heard they would have been alike unheeded ; for the men were blinded and bewildered by the rain driven horizontally by the force of the wind, and cutting the flesh like hail, and by the quickly succeeding flashes of blue lightning which illumined the midnight darkness, as if the glare of a thousand torches had suddenly gleamed from the dark sky, disclosing the laboring vessel, struggling like a living thing in mortal agony, amidst a sea of foam, and rendering the succeeding darkness blacker still, and more terrific. And now the peals of thunder rolled almost continuously over the heads of the bewildered and frightened seamen, louder than the roar of a thousand parks of artillery—so loud, so deafening, that even the wind for the moment seemed to lull as if its fury was appalled and controlled

by the terrific concussion of the atmosphere above. In one of these lulls a sharp crackling sound was heard aloft ; and a cry, as of some one shrieking in mortal terror. A bright flash of lightning lit up the scene, and those on deck cast their eyes aloft. Black forms were seen clinging with all their might to the yards and rigging, for those who had gone aloft, in obedience to the order of the captain, to furl the sails, had not only found themselves powerless to effect this, but were prevented by the presence of the wind from descending to the deck—and on they clung to their treacherous, precarious tenure with a clutch like that of drowning men ; but whence that cry ? The vessel had rolled heavily over to windward during the temporary lull, and in again making a corresponding lurch to leeward, the shroud that supported the top-gallant and royal masts, snapped like whip cord, and the masts themselves, no longer able to bear the force of the wind, splintered and rocked to and fro, and at last, with a sudden crash, snapped asunder, and fell over, dangling backwards and forwards in mid air—hanging by the lee rigging. Some of the hapless wretches who had so long clung helplessly to this frail tenure were at once precipitated into the boiling ocean, falling in the darkness, and amid the wild confusion of the elements, unseen, unheard, unheeded by their comrades below. Others still clung with the energy of despair to the dangling wreck ; but they could not long retain their hold ; some were crushed between the masts and yards, as the spars swung to and fro ; others were shaken off—even the desperate strength lent them by despair, no longer enabling their numbed and paralyzed fingers to retain their hold ; they, too, fell one by one into the seething, foaming ocean caldron beneath ; some unseen amid the blackness of the night ; the dark falling figures of others recognized for a moment in the lightning's red unearthly glare ; but the situation of those on deck was too dangerous for them to take heed of the peril of their shipmates. *They* were not men to trouble themselves at any time about the distress or agony of others ; least of all now, when they stood clinging to the bulwarks in momentary dread of being themselves swept from the deck by some mighty wave. A mortal dread seized the minds of all, for when death threatened them face to face, the evils of a misspent life, darkened by deeds of savage cruelty, such as the wild beasts of the forest wot not of—such as are only conceived in the brains of savage men, rushed to their memory and completely unnerved them ; there were some

who thought that the cruelties the evening of that fearful night had witnessed had brought upon them this judgment—that the blood of the murdered seamen had called for vengeance and aroused to fury the spirit of the storm—they fancied they heard unearthly howlings, and gibberings, and chatterings in the air, mingling with the noise of the tempest, and believed these sounds to issue from the spirits of the murdered, laughing at the doom which seemed to await the murderers.

Yet, were they not all alike, even in their terror. Some clung to the bulwarks or lashed themselves to the stanchions, and awaited with sullen gloom their apparant fate. Others wept and prayed, and swore, and groaned in the agony of mortal terror ; others were rife in promises of amendment ; and some who, now in their fright, believed firmly in the efficacy of mediation with the Being they scorned to acknowledge in their pride and prosperity, made vows and promised gifts to their patron saints, and to the Holy Virgin, if only this once they were delivered from peril. Amongst these last was the *contre-maitre*, who loudly promised to purchase half a dozen of the biggest wax candles he could procure, and place them before the altar of the chapel of the Virgin in his native town at Sagova, in Spain, if he were allowed once again to set his feet on dry land.

More heavily still the ship labored in the trough of the sea ; her planks were strained to a degree that rendered it certain that she must be leaking fast, yet none dared venture to sound the pumps. And now the sea began to pour over the deck, sweeping away the boats, and tearing away the bulwarks as though the tough oak plank were pasteboard. And at every sweep some victim was carried off into the boiling sea, his wild shriek of despair mingling with the howling of the wind and the roar of the thunder.

And now a flash of red and blue lightning, so vivid that it seemed to sear the eyeballs, and scorch out the eyesight of all who witnessed it, struck the deck amidships, near the chain-locker, and passed, hissing along the wet chain-cable, and dealing death to all with whom it came in contact, escaped by the hawse-holes. The flash was followed immediately by a clap of thunder, which seemed to burst forth from the verge of the horizon to windward, and to pass immediately over the vessel, increasing in loudness as it drew near, crashing and rolling and crashing again, as it passed away to leeward, with a sound as if the mountains of the earth were rent asunder by a thousand

explosions, and the fragments dashed in wild confusion one against the other. The wind was stilled ; even the sea was calmed with the terrible concussion, and the ship trembled in every plank. All thought that their hour was come. For a moment their prayers and tears, and groans and promises were hushed ; their eyes were blinded with the lightning, yet they seemed to gaze upon each other in blank, mute despair. The idea that now all was over seemed to flash through the brains of the survivors of that lately numerous, reckless and savage crew, but the silence was but for a moment—

“Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell,
Then shrieked the timid and stood still the brave,
While some leaped overboard, with dreadful yell,
As eager to anticipate the grave.”

The words of the poet were literally fulfilled, for that night of terror had driven some to madness, and half a dozen of the crew leaped into the sea, while the distant roar of the awful thunder peal, still faintly heard, sounded their requiem, and rushing waters joined with the howling winds in dismal chorus. The boldest now waited in momentary expectation of the vessel foundering ; but they were spared. The storm had spent its fury, and the discordant elements seemed to have exhausted themselves in that last fearful shock ; the wind lulled—the sea gradually went down, and the Dolphin, a mere wreck of her former pride and beauty, still floated in safety upon the troubled waters. Of the crew of fifty men but seventeen remained ; the rest had been washed from the decks or had fallen overboard from aloft. The carpenter sounded the pump-well ; the ship was stout and strong ; notwithstanding the wrenching her planks had sustained, there were only eighteen inches of water in the hold ; this leak could be easily kept under. Hope revived within the breast of the captain and the remnant of the crew. They would yet reach Cuba in safety. But the slaves—the miserable wretches cooped up in the hold throughout the storm—how had they fared while the ship had been tossed like a child's toy upon the waters ? As soon as the necessary work had been done to enable the half disabled vessel to proceed on her course—as soon as the wreck aloft had been cleared away, the torn sails unbent and replaced by fresh ones, and the vessel pumped dry, Captain Junot thought of the living freight below, upon the safety and health of whom the success of his voyage depended.

The hatches were removed, and Paez, accompanied by two other seamen, descended to the spar deck. God ! what an awful sight met their view. The storm had done its work upon the unhappy negroes ; the retribution which had fallen upon the guilty seamen had involved destruction to their hapless victims. As is too often the case in this world, the innocent had suffered with the guilty. The staples by which the negroes were bound to the deck had given way, and they had been tumbled violently one against the other, pell-mell, in dreadful confusion. The breath had been crushed out of some of the more weakly—they had died of suffocation ; the limbs of others were broken ; and again, others, especially the children, had fallen victims to the foul and confined air they had been compelled to breathe—for the hatches had been securely battened down and covered tightly with tarpaulins, so that a breath of fresh air could not enter the closely packed hold. The stench that arose when the hatches were lifted was insupportable ; even the brutal and practised Paez recoiled from it ; until, by admission of the fresh breeze, the hold had become in some measure purified. Then he set to work to count the number of the dead, the dying, and the helplessly maimed. Thirty were hoisted upon deck dead and disfigured ; ten others, who still breathed, but who were evidently drawing their last breath, were added to the list, and twelve had their legs and arms broken so as to render them useless. These, too, were hoisted upon deck and examined by the captain. Fifty-two in all. So much loss on the profits of the voyage ! With a fearful oath Captain Junot ordered them to be thrown overboard—the dead, the dying, and the maimed together. In vain were the shrieks, the cries of agony of the wretched beings, as they implored for mercy ; their appeals only called forth brutal jests and curses from the crew, and Paez was so irritated at the loss that he swore that he wouldn't give the Virgin the candles he had promised her. Still there were hopes that two hundred slaves might be landed in Cuba.

Another vessel had ridden out the gale in company with the Dolphin, although she had been too far distant for either to see the other—and she had not suffered as the Dolphin had ; for proper precautions had been taken ; her sails had been furled in time, and she had been “ hove to,” under her storm jib and mizen staysail. As day began to break, the captain of this vessel—the Buzzard, British sloop-of-war—had ordered more sail to be set, and the vessel proceeded on her course.

"It has been an awfully rough night, master," said the captain, addressing that officer; "I am used to the coast, and I don't know when I have experienced a more severe pampero. I pity the fate of those who have been caught in it, at the outset, unawares."

"Most of the traders here are accustomed to look out for these hurricanes," was the reply of the master.

"Sail ho-o-o!" shouted the look-out man, from aloft.

"Where away?" shouted the master, in reply.

"Dead to leeward, sir; she has nothing but her topmasts standing, and appears to be disabled."

"Take the spyglass aloft, master," said the captain, "and see what you can make of her; see if she shows any signals; whether or not, if she is disabled, we will bear down towards her."

The sea was running high, and the master started aloft, and looked in the direction pointed out by the seaman.

"What do you make her out to be, master?" shouted the captain.

"A merchantman in distress, I rather think, sir; she has carried away her top-gallant masts in the gale of last night, most likely, and the crew are bending new sails. She is close to, and you might see her easily from the deck, if the sea were to go down a little more, or if her top-gallant masts were a-taunto."

"We will bear down and see if she wants aid," said the captain; and he ordered the yards to be squared, and the course to be altered directly for the stranger.

In less than half an hour she was distinctly visible from the deck, still rolling heavily in the trough of the sea, for want of sufficient sail.

On the other hand, the captain of the *Dolphin*—for, as the reader will have surmised, it was she that had been discovered in her crippled state by the sloop-of-war—had seen the *Buzzard* bearing down towards him, and had made her out to be a ship-of-war. He cursed, and stormed, and raved, and tore his hair in his frantic rage.

"Another of those cursed cruisers," said he; "they swarm thick as bees. Oh! that I had power to annihilate them and sink them to h—I."

"What's to be done now, Senor?" asked the *contremaistre*. "We shall be overhauled, that's certain, and if we are caught with these negroes on board"—

"The ship will be taken as a prize," interrupted the captain, "and we shall be hanged as pirates, for if we are taken into port, the dead will rise up against us. We shall have to account for the prize crew of the brig-of-war.

"The negroes must go overboard. It is a pity—an infernal pity. We shall make a ruinous voyage altogether—nothing but bad luck from beginning to end," said the contre-maistre.

"It must be so," answered Junot. "There is no help for it. It is their lives or ours—but—I'll be revenged yet."

The danger was imminent. The man-of-war was not a mile distant. She would soon be within hail, and then all would be lost. Without another word the contremaistre descended with a dozen of the crew into hold. Shot were fastened to the feet of the miserable victims, and they were rapidly passed out of the port holes to leeward, so that the work of death going on should not be observed by those on board the sloop-of-war. Of all the negroes that less than twenty-four hours before filled the spar deck, but two were retained. These were the two negro children already spoken of as belonging to the Yunga Jagos woman, who had escaped from the Albatross and been carried to Liberia by the Firefly, by the crew of which vessel, the reader will recollect she was rescued. These children Captain Junot had taken a fancy to ; they were quite young, and were handed up to him, fast asleep, by the mate and placed by the captain in his own state-room berth, where he thought they would be safe from the observation of the officers of the man-of-war, even if they should insist on searching his vessel.

The man-of-war was within hail—"What ship is that?" asked the captain, through his trumpet.

"The French ship Bienfaisant, from Dominique, bound to the coast for ivory," replied Captain Junot. "We have been crippled in the gale last night."

"Do you want any assistance?" asked the captain of the sloop-of-war.

"No, I thank you ; we shall do very well. We shall run before the wind until our repairs are completed, and then we shall shape our course for the Coast again."

"I wish you success and better luck in future," said the captain of the man-of-war ; and so saying, he waved farewell with his trumpet and gave orders for the sails to be trimmed, and the course to be changed.

"That's fortunate," said Captain Junot, as he saw the man-

of-war making preparations to stand on her proper course. "Oh, what a cursed fool I was to throw those negroes overboard."

But the slaver captain had reckoned without his host. A lieutenant advanced to the captain of the sloop-of-war, and said :—

"I am greatly mistaken, sir, if that vessel is not a slaver. I could almost swear to having chased her upwards of a twelve month ago. If she be the vessel I expect she is, one of the most desperate fellows that ever lived commands her—a Frenchman of the name of Junot."

"Ha ! say you so, Mr. Howard," said the captain. "In that case we may as well send a boat on board ; but unless we have proof that she has slaves on board we can't search her. The vessel you speak of sails, I believe, under American colors."

"She does, sir ; but she *may* have slaves now on board."

"Ten thousand curses on them ; they are going to board us after all, said Junot, as he saw the mainyard of the sloop-of-war thrown aback, and a boat lowered ; but let them come. *Sacre tonnerre !* they can find nothing."

In a few moments the boat was alongside, and the lieutenant already spoken of, ascended to the deck.

"I should like to see your papers," said he to the captain, significantly.

"You shall see them," said Junot (he carried false papers already prepared), and these he showed the officer. They answered the description he had given of his vessel when he had first been hailed.

The officer looked disappointed and was preparing to return to his ship, when a man rushed out from the fore-castle, and begged the officer to remove him from the ship. "Hang me at the yard arm, if you will," said the man ; "do what you will with me, but remove me hence. This vessel is a slaver—a pirate. I have served in many a slaver ; I have become accustomed to scenes of bloodshed ; but on board this craft I have seen sights which have chilled my blood with horror. Seven of your countrymen have been murdered by that man (pointing to the captain) within the last twenty-four hours, and not half an hour since two hundred negroes were cast overboard. The Dolphin is a hell afloat, and Captain Junot is worse than the devil. If you want more proof—if you won't believe my word—search the cabin ; two negro children—all that are left—are

concealed there. But don't leave me here," and the man shuddered with horror and affright.

"The Dolphin! Captain Junot! eh?" said the officer; "as I suspected. I have long sought to make your acquaintance, Captain Junot. With your leave, I'll proceed to search the vessel. You (addressing the sailor) can go at once into the boat, my man."

"You shall suffer for this," said Junot, vindictively. "You have no right to search my ship."

"Never mind, my good fellow, we shall see. I shall at any rate secure you on the charge of murder. I hope you will be able to prove your innocence."

Seeing that remonstrance was useless, and knowing that under the guns of the sloop-of-war force would be equally so, Captain Junot resolved to submit with the best grace he could. He trusted to the silence, for their own sakes, of the rest of the crew, and hoped that the evidence of the witness would be disbelieved, and that *he* himself would not be recognized. He had got clear of many awkward scrapes through the good friend to whom the recusant sailor had aptly compared him. He hoped to get clear of this, though he felt that things looked awkward enough just now.

The two children were found in the cabin, and were sent on board the man-of-war, and the boat returning with the officer, a strong prize crew was sent on board the slaver. Captain Junot and his crew were carried on board the sloop-of-war and put in irons, to await their trial at Sierra Leone, whither the captain of the man-of-war determined at once to proceed.

CHAPTER XIX.

Seymour revisits Annabon, and finds an unwelcome visitor

CAPTAIN SEYMOUR experienced strange sensations of vague alarm at hearing of the invasion of the solitudes of Annabon. The very day after he had received the intelligence conveyed to Mr. Mordant in his nephew's letter, he set sail in the steamer which happened to be leaving at that time for St. Thomas, and thence he proceeded to the Brazils. Arrived at Bahia, he found the Albatross refitted and ready for sea; and taking his stores on board immediately, he cleared out the fol-

lowing day with Brazilian papers, and sailed on his voyage, his destination being to the same port in Loango, whence he had in two previous voyages received his cargo of human flesh.

But Captain Seymour had other ends in view besides the mere prosecution of a slaving voyage, on this occasion, the object of which will be in due time developed. He had left America in consequence of the news he had received some weeks previously to his original intention, for he did not expect that his agents at Majumba, and Quaddah, and other noted slave depots, would have a cargo ready for him so early as the period at which he now expected to arrive. Consequently, he resolved to sail to the northern and principal harbor on the island of Annabon, and leaving his vessel there, to proceed to the abode of Zuleika, and perhaps remain there a week or two, as circumstances might decide, before he again sailed for Majumba.

Nothing worthy of note occurred during the passage across the Atlantic, and in five weeks after leaving Bahia, the Albatross—the captain first reconnoitering to ascertain that the coast was clear—came to anchor off the only port in Annabon.

Leaving instructions with Mr. Toleroft to be on his guard against surprise, on the coast—for, although there was no danger of capture to be apprehended, under the present circumstances, the Albatross having, already observed, a regular clearance from a Brazilian port—still Seymour had no desire that his arrival on the coast should be known to the captains of the British and American cruisers, and suspicions thus raised which might lead to unpleasant results; for he knew, although personally unknown to any of the officers of the men-of-war, that both his ship and himself were notorious for their success in conducting the nefarious traffic in which he had been for some years engaged, and that the Albatross would be considered a glorious prize.

Once more the pinnace was manned, and Captain Seymour set sail for the secluded abode of his lovely and youthful bride. Two days afterwards he sighted the bluff point which concealed the little inlet on which was situated Zuleika's cottage. To his surprise and annoyance, a small schooner, such as the Portuguese employ in the gold dust and ivory trade, was lying at anchor off the little harbor. A glance, however, told him that the vessel was no man-of-war, and he boldly sailed in, passing close under the counter of the schooner which he hailed in Portuguese, asking her name and whence she came.

"The Dom Pablo, from Lisbon," was the reply.

"And whither are you bound?"

"To the Coast for ivory and gold dust."

"Then what the d——l do you do here?" was Seymour's muttered reply; but he hailed the vessel again—

"Is the Senór Capítano on board?"

"No, senhor; he is ashore at the cottage yonder."

"D——tion!" muttered Seymour, as he hauled aft the sheet of the pinnace's mainsail and placed her head in the direction of the landing-place.

"What boat is that?" was asked from on board the schooner.

"We came from the Brazilian brig *Esperanza*, which is lying at anchor on the other side of the island."

"Whither are you bound?"

"To the Coast, as you are. We have come here to endeavor to procure dyewoods for ballast," and thus endeavoring to deceive the *contremaître* of the schooner, Seymour sailed towards the creek, and in a few minutes stepped on shore.

He had noticed that the white flag was not flying from the flagstaff on the hill—and so far he was satisfied. He did not wish that Zuleika should as yet be aware that he was so near her. He was somewhat undecided how to act, but at length he resolved to await on shore the return of the Portuguese captain from the visit he presumed he was paying at the cottage. Two or three seamen belonging to the schooner were rambling about on the beach, and having first cautioned his own crew to maintain a strict incognito (he could trust the men, for the crew of the pinnace were all picked hands), he entered into careless conversation with them, and learnt that their captain had come from the Coast, where strange reports were afloat respecting the extreme beauty of the White Lady, or the Recluse of Annabon, as Zuleika was called, and being a young man—trading in his own vessel—his curiosity had been awakened, and he had resolved to visit the island and ascertain if the reports were true.

"And *diabolo!*" continued his informant, "our young captain finds enough to amuse himself with here. He has been here a week already, and seems in no hurry to sail. *Chanzas aparte*," (joking apart) added the sailor, speaking in Spanish, for Seymour spoke Portuguese but indifferently. "I fancy he is in love with the lady."

Seymour bit his lips to conceal his rising choler. He felt

inclined to strike the unsuspecting seaman to the earth ; but he restrained himself with a violent effort and asked : " And you *Amego mio*—have you seen the lady ? "

" *No, Diabolo !* our captain keeps the sight of the treasure to himself—*Entiende, Senor*. I am half inclined to think he means to run off with the *Senora* ; but here he comes. *A los pies es V., Senor Capitano*, I must go down to the boat."

Seymour advanced to meet the captain of the schooner, who was a handsome young Portuguese. He extended his hand to Seymour—and addressed him in Portuguese, taking him at once to be the captain, probably, of some trader like that which he himself commanded. Noticing from the accent of Seymour that he understood Portuguese but indifferently, he then continued the conversation in Spanish, asking him whence he came and what had led him to pay a visit to the island.

Seymour replied as he had done to the *contremaistre*, and the young Portuguese told him frankly that he had come to the wrong side of the island for dye-woods.

" Confess," said he, laughingly, " it is to see the fair recluse of this island you have come."

" And if I have."

" *Caramba !* If you have ? Do not look so savage, *Senor*. If you have, you will see, by-and-bye, a fairy that would set the hearts of half the *caballeros* in Madrid, or Lisbon either, in a flame."

Seymour still managed to control the rising choler which was well nigh overpowering him. He felt the mingled sensations of jealousy, doubt, fear, and the desire of vengeance, rising in his breast and almost stifling him ; but he wished to know more ; he wished to be satisfied of the faith of Zuleika, and to ascertain whether the careless words uttered by the sailor had any foundation in truth.

" Come," said the young Portuguese, " it is growing late, *Senor*. Let us pay a visit together to the fair *Senora* to-morrow—and to-day you will come on board and dine with me. Come, I will take no denial. I want some one to bear me company—and I will describe to you this island enchantress."

" One would think," said Seymour, forcing himself to speak in a jocular tone, in spite of the rage that was smouldering in his bosom, " One would think you were in high favor with this *Senora*, whoever she be."

" *Caramba !* no," said the young man; gaily. " The lady is an icicle. Lovely as one of Canova's, or Raphael's ideals, and

as cold and passionless. I have visited her every day for a week, and have wasted my time for naught. She is civil—nothing more ; but the Portuguese have a proverb, ‘an icicle may be thawed with the warmth of a rushlight.’ There is nothing like perseverance in these matters. But you will come on board and dine, and to-morrow we will visit together this Penelope, who is so faithful to her absent Ulysses. You have read *Telemaque*, Capitano. *Diabolo !* I wish I were the happy man. But I have a plan in my head, which I will relate to you after dinner.”

Seymour breathed free again. How could he for a moment have doubted the purity and faith of Zuleika. “Yes,” he thought, “I will go on board and dine with this gay young *caballero*—and hear his plan, as he calls it. I, too, have a plan in my head, he little wots of.”

He accepted Captain De Silva’s invitation (De Silva was the name of the young Portuguese), and went on board the schooner with him—again cautioning his own crew to maintain perfect secrecy.

As he left the shore with his newly found companion, he cast a long, lingering glance in the direction of Zuleika’s abode. He could scarcely restrain his impatience at this delay ; “but,” he thought, “it is better thus : I shall see you to-morrow, Zuleika—and alone. And after that—”

CHAPTER XX.

The Sinking of the Portuguese Schooner—Zuleika Departs from the Island of Annabon—The Destruction of the Cottage by Fire.

SHE was a long, low schooner, the *Dom Pablo*, beautifully moulded, with lofty, graceful, raking masts, leaning so far back, indeed, that a plumb line dropped from the main-top-mast head, would have cleared the taffrail. She was painted black—black all over—hull and masts all of the same sombre color, except that the former was relieved by a narrow ribbon-like gilded streak, and as she moved gracefully upon the gently heaving billows of the bay, the brilliant gleam of her copper bottom—for she was coppered quite up to the water-line—glittered in the rays of the sun and reflected in the clear water. She might readily

have been taken for a pirate craft—the Dom Pablo—for she was just one of those beautifully modelled, sneaking, serpent-like looking crafts that honest merchantmen like to give a wide berth to, when they happen to descry them hanging close under the land, or bearing down suspiciously towards them just towards nightfall, and she carried six brightly polished, four pound brass carronades, which shone like burnished gold—and one of those large, long guns, amid-ships, turning upon a swivel, familiarly called, in sea parlance, a Long Tom; she sailed like a witch. If her captain wanted to speak a vessel he happened to sight, he was down upon her like a flash of lightning—and many a worthy skipper's heart leaped to his mouth, and many a peaceful passenger wished himself on shore, or any where else but where he was, as he run to and fro, by the captain's advice, trying the often resorted to, but childish game, of making the suspicious-looking stranger believe that the said passenger was multiplied into half a dozen men, as his head bobbed up and down in half a dozen different places—a scheme which only serves to amuse the knowing ones—and many an old rusty gun had been bowsed out of the hold when the Dom Pablo hove in sight, and clumsily placed on its decrepit and worm-eaten stand, which it was a mercy was not fired, for ten to one, but it would have exploded and wounded or killed half of the crew who brought it up from its damp resting-place for their protection; but there was really no harm in the Dom Pablo, nor in her captain, Dom Sebastian De Silva. The latter was as gallant and gay a young caballero as ever flaunted in the streets of Lisbon, or trod the deck of a vessel. A handsome, good humored fellow, conscious of his good looks and proud of them; a little given to foppery and dandyism, as might be seen by his wearing, as nearly as he dared do, the uniform of an officer in the Portuguese navy; but this was excusable, since he was no poltroon, with all his foppery, and he had plenty of means to support it. He was the son of a wealthy merchant in Lisbon, who traded largely with the natives of the African coast for gold dust and ivory, and the young Sebastian being of an adventurous turn, and fond of the excitement of sea life, had made several voyages in his father's vessels, and at length, on the day he had attained his majority, had received a present of the beautiful craft he now commanded.

The heavy armament, that, for so small a vessel, the Dom Pablo carried, was partly for the purpose of protection against

the sometimes treacherous attacks of the natives on the coast, and partly to serve the purpose of frightening, and of fighting too, if need were, any similar craft, the employment of whose crew was less honorable. Besides Captain De Silva chose to have everything handsome and warlike about his bonny little vessel, and he took as much pride in her personal appearance, as he could possibly have done in that of his wife or his mistress, had he possessed either. But Captain De Silva's heart had never hitherto been severely wounded by the arrows of Cupid, though several times stray darts had glanced upon it and pierced it slightly, shot from the black eyes of the Portuguese *senhoritas*; but a short voyage had been sufficient to heal these slight abrasions, and before the captain had been three weeks upon blue water, his heart had, hitherto, become as sound as ever. The Dom Pablo was sufficiently profitable to afford abundant means to meet the expenses of Dom Sebastian, although the old merchant, his father, would certainly not have found her so creditably mentioned in figures upon his ledger, as any of the other less elegant vessels in his service; for Senhor Sebastian sometimes took a whim into his head to make flying visits to various places, to see which his curiosity had been excited, altogether heedless of the real object of his voyage—and it was on one of these visits that he and his ship were fallen in with by Captain Seymour.

Senhor De Silva had been boarded by the *Alacrity*—Captain Hall's ship—the British craft fancying her to be what, as we have observed, many other persons feared her to be—a piratical craft—and he had not only found out his mistake, but he had found the Senhor to be such a capital, jovial fellow, and his vessel so well provided with luxuries not easily attainable on board cruisers that have been a long time on a station, that he had spent some time on board the Dom Pablo, and had dined with the captain, and learning his position from him in the course of conversation (for among other accomplishments Senhor Sebastian spoke tolerably good English), he had related to him his adventure on the island of Annabon, and laughingly advised him to pay a visit to its lonely and mysterious inhabitant.

Captain De Silva did not need pressing—it was just the sort of adventure to seize hold of his imagination, and although he was at the time close to the port whither he was bound, and sailing before the wind towards it, he braced his yards sharp up directly and beat back again to the island. As he had informed

Captain Seymour, he had been there a week, and had every day, for several hours in the day, paid his court to the fair recluse. To tell the truth, the inconstant affections of Senhor Sebastian had been fixed, from the first moment he had gazed upon the lovely countenance and the fairy, sylph-like figure of Zuleika; and though he had, in the first instance, intended to make but a passing visit, he had found himself bound to the spot by some resistless fascination. Consequently his crew had been keeping holiday, roaming about amongst the romantic woods and glades that abounded on the island, or bathing in the cool shady inlets, or making up parties and going on fishing or shooting excursions. In fact, enjoying a season of recreation, such as seldom falls to the lot of poor Jack; while their captain, dressed to the very best advantage, was assiduously prosecuting his suit toward the enchantress, who had innocently and unsuspectingly entrapped him. Of course this was very pleasant and agreeable to the crew, but very tantalizing and not very profitable to the captain.

He had never yet been able to discover who his inamorata was, or how she came to be on the island, or whence she had come, or in fact anything about her; and the more he was tantalized in this fashion, still the more was he fascinated with his mysterious charmer. He had tried to bribe the negroes—he had tried to cajole the youth who bore her company (Jane Miller), but he had failed in learning anything. Zuleika, simple unsuspecting, unsophisticated child, as she was, might have been beguiled into making some satisfactory explanation; but she had been well schooled by Jane, and the negroes had been warned, on pain of their mistress's and Captain Seymour's displeasure, to maintain inviolable secrecy, and they had not betrayed their trust. At the expiration of a whole week Captain De Silva was as wise as ever and no wiser. He saw that Zuleika wore a plain gold ring on the third finger of her hand, (warning symbol!) but he disregarded it. He could not learn who the husband was that the ring typified, and he persuaded himself that it was merely worn by the innocent girl as a pretty ornament.

Thus stood matters when Captain Seymour arrived to interrupt the gallant Senhor's wooing; but we will let him further explain his story in his own words.

Seymour stepped into the boat and went on board the *Dom Pablo*, with De Silva. He was startled when he set his feet upon the decks. He thought the *Albatross* a model of a ves-

sel—so undoubtedly she was; but the Dom Pablo was like a fairy craft; so bright, so clean, so neatly was everything arranged; and her deck! why, the most fastidious exquisite might have sat down and eaten his meals from off of that deck, it was so white, so pure from soil or stain, and in the cabin everything was arranged with a degree of refined taste that equally threw the Albatross into the shade. The dinner, too, was a capital one, (Captain De Silva had not forgotten to bring a good cook with him,) and the wines were excellent—they must have been some of the choice wines from the elder De Silva's cellar in Lisbon—so ripe, so rich, so exquisite in flavor they were. The cabin was furnished with sofas, and pistols and fowling pieces were suspended from the sides in a variety of designs, and glittering like silver and gold in their bright polish. These were singular ornaments, but Seymour could but acknowledge in reply to the question of De Silva, that they were really appropriate. Little was said during dinner; but when the steward had removed the cloth and placed a fresh supply of wine upon the table, and a variety of fruits and delicious preserves fresh from Portugal, and De Silva had produced a box of superb Manillas, the conversation turned naturally enough upon the lady of the isle.

De Silva related the manner in which he had become aware of the existence of this mysterious, fairy-like inhabitant of Annabon.

"I resolved," said he, "as soon as I heard the story from the lips of the Englishman, to pay a visit to the island. *Caramba!* I lost no time—I don't know what my father will say—but my cargo is waiting for me at Lahoa. I have just returned from Ibou, where I have been laying in my ballast in logwood, and they will wonder what has become of me. San Petro! it took me a fortnight to beat back again to this enchanted island, and here have I been a week. I suspect my cargo is disposed of to some one else; but *esta nada*, I am satisfied to lose a little money, if I can attain my aim with regard to this island damsel."

Seymour felt his blood rush with fearful rapidity through his veins as he listened; but he controlled his rising passion.

"You said, *senor*,* (using the Spanish term of respect, for

* The reader will perceive that we have used both the Spanish and Portuguese methods of spelling the title of personal respect (in Spanish *senor*, in Portuguese *senhor*, though both are sounded the same), as occasion has been necessary. That is to say, we have used *senhor* when speaking of Dom Sebastian in the first person—but he used *senor* when in conversation with Seymour, as they spoke in Spanish. The titles *Dom* and *Don* apply similarly—both have a similar sound, but the former is Portuguese—the latter Spanish.

the conversation was, as we have mentioned before, carried on in Spanish) "that you had some plan in view with regard to this lady whom I have yet to be introduced to? I shall be glad to hear it. You said you had not yet met with much favor from the lady?"

"*Caramba!* nor have I. As I told you, before, *Senor*, the damsel is as cold as an icicle; but listen—I know not whom she is, but I suspect she has been stolen, and brought hither by some of the rascally piratical slaver captains who frequent this coast. She is ignorant, poor thing, of the sad future that awaits her in such a case. It is shocking to contemplate—so young, so beautiful! Now, I intend, since I cannot entice her to come on board the *Dom Pablo*—I believe it is all through that strange youth she has placed on the island to serve as her *Ganymede*—to carry her off, and take her back with me to Lisbon, and there to marry her. My plan is all arranged. No blood will be spilt—no more force used than is necessary. The youth she has with her I shall secure, as well as the negroes. I intend to leave them on the island unharmed. I don't want to be troubled with the boy. He might, by and by, tell unpleasant stories. My men are aware of my plan, and all is arranged to take place to-morrow night. To-morrow, *Senor Caballero*, we will go together and see the lady. You will confess that my heart, which has withstood the artillery of so many pairs of black eyes in Lisbon, has not succumbed at last to an unworthy object. *Santa Maria!* she is fairer than *Venus* herself."

"But," said Seymour, amused, in spite of his vexation, at the enthusiasm of the young Portuguese, "perhaps the lady would not be willing to marry you—perhaps she is already wedded."

"No, no; I will not believe that last supposition; and as to her not being willing to marry me—*Caramba!* I will love her so much—I will worship her so earnestly—that, by and by, she will love me."

"But your parents," said Seymour; "how will they fancy your marriage with an unknown damsel—the daughter and sister, perhaps, if, indeed, not the wife of some desperate outlaw?"

"My parents," said the young man, placing his hand affectingly upon his bosom, "have nothing to say in such an affair as this; '*les affections de la cœur*,' as they say in France, are not to be controlled, or even regulated, by parental authority."

"Well, *Senor*, I see your wound is incurable ; but recollect I have not yet seen the damsel. Suppose I, too, should fall in love, and become your rival. How would you manage then?"

"I conceive the lady is mine by prior right of possession. Acknowledge, *Senor*, it would be ungallant in you to offer to take such an advantage; but there is little fear of that, I trust."

"And you say this little affair is to come off to-morrow night? Suppose, in the mean time, her father, or brother, or lover, or, as I said before, perchance her husband should happen to come into the harbor, and overthrow your plans?"

"Then I must succumb for the present ; but I would follow her to the world's end, but I would learn who she is. *Senor*, I am somewhat inclined to be Quixotic in my views—I am a great admirer of that glorious romance of yours (*De Silva* was under the impression that *Seymour* was a Spaniard)."

"I think this plan of yours Quixotic indeed," replied *Seymour*, sarcastically, for he could no longer entirely control himself. "I think it wrong, and I would oppose it myself. Listen, *Senor Don Sebastian*. Would it not be better that you should forget this foolish caprice—this absurd endeavor to obtain the love of a strange damsel, whom you have only seen for the first time, a week since, and to proceed on your voyage?"

"*Diabolo !* no, *Senor*," haughtily replied the young Portuguese. "*Senor*, you have eaten bread and drank wine with me, at my table. I do not wish to quarrel with you, but, mark me, I am resolved to act as I have said; you can aid me or not, as you please; but, if you oppose me, I am your enemy to the death." *Senor Sebastian*, in his excitement, while conversing as above, and relating his plans to *Seymour*, had indulged in the wine cup more freely than was usual with him, and *Seymour*, who had been more guarded, and who, since he found his advice of no avail, had resolved to put his own desperate plan into execution—saw that further argument was useless. He determined to temporize with his guest, and he merely replied:

"As you please, *Senor*. I shall not oppose your plan to-morrow. I only gave such advice as I thought best—but we will see this lady together. Now, as it is growing late, I must go ashore."

"Nay, *Senor*," replied the young Portuguese captain, whose

ill humor was appeased as quickly as it had risen; "I was a fool to get angry; you must sleep on board to-night. I have a spare state room."

"I seldom sleep in the cabin in these warm climates; but I will accept your offer, and wrap my cloak around me under the awning on the quarter-deck; but I must first go ashore and tell my men, or they will be expecting me."

"As you will, *Senor*," said Sebastian. "I am sleepy; I think I have drank too much wine; I shall turn in and sleep. Bring your men on board with you, captain. To-morrow we will breakfast together, and I will take you with me to the lady's bower; but be discreet, captain—be discreet;" and he rose up, and walking with a somewhat unsteady step to his berth, he threw himself, dressed as he was, on the bed, murmuring, as he closed his eyes:

"To-morrow, *Senor*—to-morrow—be patient until to-morrow."

"*To-morrow!*" muttered Seymour, between his teeth, as he ascended the ladder to the deck. "Yes, *to-night!*"

He jumped into the schooner's boat, and two of the crew pulled him ashore—his own crew were waiting for him on the beach. They had, however, begun to give him up, and were advising amongst themselves whether they should wait longer, or endeavor to find shelter from the dew in some of the negro huts that skirted the beach.

"I have need of you, men," said he, as, after having sprung ashore, he had told the schooner's men to pull aboard again—sending a message to the *contremaître* of the schooner, to the effect that he would be on board in his own boat, as he had promised the captain, in the course of half an hour. "I have need of you, men, to-night. You must come on board that schooner with me, and this night she must be ours. Some of you have been engaged in deeds of piracy; but I, since I have commanded a vessel myself, have always held aloof from robbery or bloodshed, even when most strongly tempted. It has not been upon principle that I have done this. No; I have suffered and witnessed enough to satisfy me that all men prey upon each other; and the fear of incurring the penalties of the law only prevents even social communities from degenerating into the practise of outrage upon life and property. As it is, society is a system of hypocrisy—every man hating, fearing, or envying his neighbor. I have, therefore, no compunction in raising my hand against my fellows: it is merely instinct,

natural softness of disposition, perhaps, that makes me shrink from and shudder at the sight of blood, except it be spilt while my own blood is heated by excitement ; but this night that schooner must be ours ; when the morning breaks, she must be sunk fathoms deep in the ocean, and none of her crew must survive to tell the tale. It is unnecessary for me to tell you why I have resolved upon this—for I know that you will obey me without question—enough for me to say, that, as you are aware, I have repeatedly visited this island, on business concerning myself alone, the nature of which some of you—nay, most, if not all of you—are aware of. The captain of yonder schooner has discovered my secret, and although I might foil him in his designs, I could not trust to the silence either of himself or his crew. It is a stern decree—a fate I would willingly spare them—but they must die. The crew consists of sixteen men, including the captain. There are nine of us, armed and ready to act—while they are unprepared and unsuspecting of treachery. Of course, they can be easily overpowered, as they awaken from their sleep. Go to rest when on board, so as to excite no suspicion. I will give you the signal when to commence. The vessel contains property of considerable value. Such of it as can be readily saved shall belong wholly to you. I do not intend to share in the spoil. Conceal your arms ; be cautious, yet ready to act on the instant, and you will succeed without difficulty. Now, men, are you ready to follow me ?”

“All—all ready,” shouted the men.

“Then man the boat, and let us go on board.”

In the course of a few minutes Seymour and his pinnace's crew stood upon the deck of the *Dom Pablo*.

“Is the captain asleep ?” asked Seymour of the *contremaître*, who was standing at the gangway, half asleep, waiting to receive the visitors.

“Si, Senor, and I have been ashore all day. I am tired. I am glad you have come, that I, too, may sleep.”

“Do you keep no watch ?” asked Seymour.

“No, Senor, not in this harbor. *Caramba!* there is no danger—the anchorage is good, the water is smooth, and we do not fear any attacks from the natives of this island.”

Seymour glanced satisfactorily at his men.

“I thought you kept watch,” said he. “Who are those two men walking the deck, forward there ?”

“They are the nominal watch, Senor, but here we allow

them to sleep. The boat coming alongside has roused them for a moment—they will soon sleep again.”

“I told Don Sebastian that I should repose in the cot under the awning; but I think I will go below to the berth the captain offered me,” said Seymour.

“As you please, Senor. For my part, I shall stretch myself on deck. Diabolo! the cabin is too warm for me.”

“And my men?” said Seymour, inquiringly.

“Can pick out the softest plank until daylight, and then we will give them a good breakfast. We feed well on board the Dom Pablo, Senor.”

Seymour carelessly told his men to lie down where they could find the best place, while he himself descended to the cabin.

In the course of half an hour he returned to the deck. The crew of the schooner were all soundly sleeping—like their captain, they had indulged, most of them, too freely. Poor fellows, they were making the most of their holiday—but little fancying, as their minds wandered in their slumbers to the sunny banks of the Douro and the Tagus, where they had left their wives, and sweethearts, and families, and friends—little dreaming of the fate that was hanging over their heads.

Seymour's crew heard his light footstep, as he reached the deck. They looked inquiringly towards him, as he drew near the spot where they were half sitting, half lying, in a cluster.

“Is it time, Captain?” asked one, in a whisper.

“Not yet—not yet,” replied Seymour, in a like low tone.

“Who is there on deck?” he asked, glancing around him.

“Only two sailors, and the *contremaistre*. They are sleeping soundly.”

“They must not awake. You will be able to secure their arms and legs with some of the rattling-line I see there, without disturbing their slumbers. This done, you must do the same good office to the sleepers below. The captain is already secure—I do not fear his waking; but, at all events, he is fast, hand and foot. Mind men, if it be possible to avoid it, there must be no bloodshed. When all the crew are secured, we will scuttle the ship, whilst they are sleeping, and then there will be time to remove your spoil—the valuables from the cabin—the men's chests from the fore-castle, too, if you choose. Now, to work, and noiselessly—all depends upon speed and quietness.”

So soundly were all the devoted crew of the ill-fated Dom

Pablo sleeping, that not one of them was aroused while the stout cordage was being wound around them in such a manner that none of them could rise to their feet when awakened ; and, this done, two of the men were directed to pierce augur holes in the sides, below the water-mark.

It was done : the unconscious victims were bound down in their floating home, so soon to be their coffin ; and meanwhile, the valuables from the cabin, and, indeed, every movable article the pinnace could carry, was placed on board of her, and the pirates—for such Seymour and his crew now undoubtedly were—entered the boat themselves, so as to get beyond the effects of the suction, when the schooner should go down. They were none too soon in the boat—the little vessel was sinking rapidly, and the noise of the water rushing in had apparently waked up one or more of the sleepers ; for, as the boat was being pulled rapidly beyond the reach of the impending danger, the crew heard a voice shouting aloud, in tones of alarm and terror.

“ Pull away—pull men—out of hearing of that voice ! ” shouted Seymour, and he pressed both hands on his ears, as though seeking to shut out the sound, and the men, animated by the same impulse—for the tones of that voice, so full of anguish, struck to the hearts of the most hardened amongst them—did pull with all their might, until the perspiration rolled like rain drops down their cheeks, and their light clothing was as thoroughly saturated as if they had dipped it overboard into the water. And then they stopped, as with one accord, and looked back with straining eyes. The Dom Pablo was still afloat, and her tall, graceful masts, could still be traced in the clear atmosphere of that starlit night ; but the black line of the hull was now a mere streak on the surface of the water ; and now the masts sway heavily to and fro, and the vessel gives a sudden jerk forward, and the eyes of the pinnace's crew are fixed upon her with a serpent-like fascination, while the warm perspiration has turned to a cold clammy sweat upon their faces—a mortal terror seems for the moment to have possessed them, and a convulsive shudder passes through their frames, which causes the pinnace itself, deeply laden as it is, to tremble ; for now the vessel jerks forward still more violently, and again the bow recedes from the water, as if the beautiful craft were struggling to avert its doom ; but in vain ; the last plunge is made, and the Dom Pablo, so lately riding in queenly grace and beauty on the

gently flowing billows of the bay, has sunk to the bottom, and sixteen souls, in all the pride of health and strength, have passed into eternity.

"Pull to the shore," said Seymour, in a stern tone; and then he muttered, "*To-morrow!* did he not say *to-morrow*? Well, where will he meet his morrow? and by and by, where will be mine? Psha! the fool—he brought it all on his own head. It was not *my* fault. Pull away, men," he shouted, louder and more sternly than before. "Pull away—let us quit this cursed spot."

And the men did pull with all their might, still keeping their gaze fixed upon the spot where the Dom Pablo had disappeared, as though they expected and dreaded to see the ghosts of the drowned victims arise from beneath the dark water. All those men had been guilty many a time of lawless deeds—some had already imbrued their hands in human blood—but there were some amongst them who felt that on that night the burning mark of Cain had been for the first time stamped upon their brows, never more to be effaced.

It wanted yet some hours of dawn, and when they had reached the shore they tried to sleep; but little slumber visited their eyelids that night. But one cry had been heard, yet fancy echoed and re-echoed that cry of agony, and the mingled voices of the drowning victims seemed to be howling around the murderers in the midst of the gloom.

Seymour sat apart, his face buried in his hands. What were the thoughts of the wretched man during the residue of that night of horror?

At length day dawned. Never before had day appeared to dawn so slowly to those guilty men; but the bright, warm sun rose at last, diffusing gladness around, and the gloom passed from them, and some of the more hardened even affected to jest upon the occurrences of the night; but Seymour—the most guilty of all, the promoter of the dreadful deed—sternly rebuked them, and, bidding them remain by the pinnacle, bent his steps towards the residence of Zuleika. * * *

The bright beams of the rising sun had no sooner flashed on the casement of the bed-room where Zuleika slept than she sprang from her couch, and after performing her morning ablutions, and hastily dressing herself, she sought the couch of Jane Miller.

"Wake up," she said, "see what a lovely morning; let us walk out before the hour arrives on which that strange man

will repeat his tiresome visits. Oh! I wish Seymour would come. Surely, now that I have been so much annoyed, he will remove me hence—to—to his own country."

Jane Miller arose from the bed on which she had been reposing, and was soon ready to join Zuleika in her accustomed morning ramble. Their first destination was to the summit of the eminence where stood the flag-staff, which summit commanded an extended view of the ocean.

Zuleika arrived first at the flag-staff, and her gaze was naturally directed towards the spot where the schooner had been at anchor for the past week.

"Is it possible," she said, as Jane approached her, "or do my eyes deceive me. See, Jane! the Portuguese schooner has sailed during the night, and yet the captain said he should come here again, to-day. Oh, I am so glad! Now, if I could only see my husband's ship, I should be quite happy. He has been long away. Surely he must come soon now."

"The schooner seems, indeed, to have sailed," said Jane Miller, as she gazed towards the anchorage. "The captain has taken his departure suddenly; but I am glad of it. I should dread to see strangers here when Seymour comes."

"Let us go down to the landing-place," said Zuleika. "It is a long time since we have walked there; I have been too frightened to go there since those strangers have been here," and without waiting for Jane's reply, she bounded away down the hill, with the grace and speed of a fawn, followed almost as rapidly by her more staid companion. They soon reach the path which led to the landing-place, through the wood, but in another moment stopped suddenly and panic stricken—

"The vessel has sailed and left some of the crew on the island. Oh! what can be the meaning of this?" asked Zuleika.

"Let us return to the cottage," replied Jane. "See, some one is approaching towards us."

Zuleika gazed in the direction pointed out by Jane, and to the astonishment of her companion, immediately uttered a cry of delight and ran forward to meet the stranger.

"It is George—dear George," she said. "He has come at last," and before Jane could recover from her surprise, Zuleika was in her husband's embrace.

For the time being the guilty man forgot the horrors of the past night, which he had been brooding over as he walked along.

"My own Zuleika," he said, "this meeting repays me for all my anxiety. I have been very anxious about you, love."

"And I have much to tell you, when I have time; but not now—oh, not now—I am too happy; but George, you have come at last to take me away from this place; have you not?"

"Why, dearest?"

"Because, I am unhappy here. So many strangers come here now—and, perhaps I am foolish—but I am afraid to live here alone any longer."

"It is as I thought," muttered Seymour to himself. "What I have heard has been the truth." Then he added aloud. "I have come to take you home, Zuleika—to-day. Can you get ready to go with me to-day?"

"Yes—in an hour," exclaimed the delighted girl; "but George, where is your ship?"

"I have come in the pinnace, as usual, darling," said Seymour. "You will not be afraid to go in her with me to the place where my ship is at anchor?"

"I will go anywhere—everywhere with you, George," said the young girl, looking up smilingly and lovingly into her husband's face. "Are you going to take me to America?"

"I am going to take you to a new, and I hope a more happy and pleasant home," answered Seymour, evading the question.

"To *your* home, George?"

"Yes, love, to *my* home; at least to the place I hope soon to make my home."

Thus chatting together they walked on in the direction of the cottage. Jane Miller had remained on the spot where she had stood when Zuleika first espied Seymour. Until then, the latter had not noticed her, if he had, in his delight at meeting Zuleika, he had disregarded her.

"Ah, Harry," said he; "how have you been since I have been away. The air of Annabon seems to agree with you, boy. You are blushing like a rose. How have Harry and you agreed together, Zuleika?" addressing the latter.

"Oh, famously," replied Zuleika. "I should have been still more lonesome had it not have been for his companionship. You will take her"—she stopped (Zuleika was nearly forgetting herself; but Seymour had not noticed the slip of the tongue.) "You will take him with us to our new home—to your home, won't you, dear George?"

"If he chooses to accompany you, dear—but he is his own master in that regard—"

"Oh, then I am sure he'll go," interrupted Zuleika—then suddenly recollecting herself, and checking her speech, as though some painful thought had crossed her mind, she added—"But no, perhaps I am wrong; perhaps Harry had better leave us. *He* has friends he wishes to see at home—I have only you, George," and throwing her arm around her husband's neck, she raised her slight figure on tiptoe, and gently pulled his face towards her, again pressed her lips to his.

"A sudden change in your fancy, darling," said Seymour, returning the kiss with interest. "Well, settle that matter between you. Let Harry make what choice he pleases. But now let us go to the cottage, dear. We must be away to-night, and there is much to be done."

"And you shall see how quickly I can do it, George," replied Zuleika. "There is only one regret—I shall dread to bid good-by forever to my poor faithful negroes."

"Better not say good-by at all, then," replied Seymour, who had his own object in this arrangement.

"I could never leave them without saying farewell," answered Zuleika; "I should ever be sorry for it afterwards. They have been so kind always. It would be ungrateful."

"You would think of the parting twice as bitterly, believe me, Zuleika, if you subjected yourself to the bitterness of saying good-by. But, never mind that now. To the cottage and get things in readiness."

It was a more sorrowful and a longer task than Zuleika had first thought, this leaving a home—lonely enough, but still endeared to her by so many ties. There were her pet kids and fawns to pat and caress for the last time. She had not thought of this. There were all her pets amongst the negro children, too; she had forgotten them. In her delight at Seymour's arrival; at the thought—poor child!—engendered by her own bright hopes, that she was going to live with him at his own home, and to be separated from him no more, she had forgotten, that although she loved Seymour with an all-engrossing love, there were still numerous other little ties attached to her heart which could not rudely be snapped asunder, without causing that gentle heart to bleed. But the fiat had gone forth from the lips of him she loved and worshipped with all the purity and depth of a true woman's love, and she hastened to prepare for this momentous change in her mode of

life. She and Jane, or rather Harry, as she styled her again now, were busy all day—and in the hurry and bustle much was forgotten that would otherwise have saddened her mind. By midnight, all was ready for their departure. The negroes were asleep; they had no thought of her departure, and Seymour would not have them awakened. We have said already, he had his own object in view. The seamen were called up from the beach, and the luggage removed to the pinnace; and then Zuleika, accompanied by Seymour and Jane Miller, and the only personal attendant who resided in the cottage, also went on board.

“Wait here for me,” said Seymour, after having seen her safe to the boat. “I have forgotten something at the cottage, I will return as soon as possible. Get all ready for starting,” addressing the seamen.

He was absent about three quarters of an hour.

“Now, put off,” said he, as he returned, and springing on board he seated himself beside Zuleika under the awning in the stern sheets of the pinnace—which in a short time was gliding swiftly over the waves, and fast leaving Zuleika’s home, for so many years, behind. They had just reached the point that would have shut out the inlet and harbor from view, when a bright lurid flame seemed to burst forth from the midst of the woods, in the direction of the cottage.

“What is that!” said Zuleika, greatly alarmed.

“It is your cottage burning, darling, I have fired it—don’t be alarmed.”

“But the negroes—the poor, helpless negroes,” said the girl.

“They are safe, love. It is only the residence lately occupied by you that is on fire. The negroes will be awakened when they see the flames, and will make their escape.”

“Why have you burned my cottage—the dear old cottage where I have lived so long, George?”

“I have motives you can’t understand, love. Some day, perhaps, you shall hear them. Now for our new home.”

And the pinnace sped on, her pathway light across the waters by the reflection of the flames which burned fiercely and brilliantly lighted up the entire horizon.

The scene was grand and picturesque; but the reflection of those lurid flames, and the awful sublimity of the scene, struck horror to the hearts of the seamen.

They recollected the horrible deed of the previous night, and

the red flames seemed, to their superstitious imaginations, to be the flames of Hell—bursting forth and pursuing them, even across the waters, as though in haste to surround and consume them for their misdeeds. But the boat sped quietly along, and the night passed away and the morning dawned, and towards the close of the day the pinnace arrived at the place where the Albatross lay—and Zuleika slept that night in the cabin of her husband's ship.

CHAPTER XXI.

Mr. Mordant displays his Charity in the midst of his Misfortunes—He meets with a severe Domestic Affliction.

“DEAR me, dear me, how very singular—how incomprehensible to me is this determination of Seymour's,” muttered Mr. Mordant to himself, as he was sitting in his library in his house in ——— Place, with a packet of letters before him—one of which he had twice perused, and still held in his hand; and the wealthy old merchant laid the hand which held the letter on his knee, and with knit brows and compressed lips, sat twirling his gold double eye-glass round his finger by the black silk ribbon which held it, as was customary with him, when in what is termed a brown study. “Perfectly incom-prehensible,” he repeated, slowly emphasising the syllables—“I can't understand it,” and he raised his left hand which held the letter, and again placing his eye-glass to his eye ran over sundry of the paragraphs again.

“* * * * I have made arrangements for a supply of *freight*, as usual, with the Loango chiefs,'—um—um—um. All very well, so far as that goes—‘Tolcroft will navigate the vessel to the Brazils. He is careful, and I have instructed him how to act; besides furnishing him with letters of introduction to certain parties you wot of, in Aracati and Bahia’—very well, all very well, if Tolcroft is able to manage things properly. He is a good seaman enough, I know that; but, bless me, such a blundering, uncouth dog—that I have my misgivings.

“‘I think’ (again reading the letter), ‘you should expect to hear of the arrival of the Albatross at Aracati, or somewhere upon the coast, during the ensuing month of August, if all goes on favorably.’ Yes, if all goes on favorably; but it is too bad of Seymour, to play me this trick. What can have possessed

the man? What mad freak has he taken into his head? 'I arrived at Sierra Leone, a week ago, and shall leave for St. Lewis on the Senegal, to-morrow, in a French coasting craft, there I shall probably find a vessel bound to the southern coast of France, and as imperative business calls me to the Mediterranean, I shall embrace that, which I think the readiest opportunity of reaching that sea. It is not necessary at present to explain my future plans; but if all goes well, you will see me in New York by October next.'

"Strange, very strange indeed! but what else does he say! Ah—

"* * * * * By-the-by—I hear sad tidings of the Dolphin. Junot, it appears got away from the cruiser, which, you recollect, I informed you had captured her and well nigh entrapped me; but he was caught in a *pampero* and his vessel was disabled—sheer carelessness on his part. These *pamperos* are quite harmless if a proper look-out is kept and sail reduced in time—and she was taken the following day by a British man-of-war, and, of course, made a prize of—having at the time she was disabled upwards of two hundred slaves on board—whom Junot threw overboard when he saw the man-of-war was going to board her. He might have got clear off—though at a dreadful sacrifice of life and property—after all; but, it appears that he had *expended* the prize crew who had been placed on board by the vessel that first captured him, and from which he made his escape—cleverly enough—I give him credit for that. But one of his crew, horrified at the scenes he had witnessed—Junot was always d—d careless who he engaged, brute as he was—informed the British officer of the murder. Of course the Dolphin was seized, and she and her officers and crew were carried into St. Helena, where the latter were brought to trial. The vessel was condemned and sold, and the captain and officers sentenced to death. The two mates were hanged; but Junot shot himself in prison the night preceding the day on which he was to have been executed. The crew were sent adrift, and I suppose by this time are scattered about in various places. Altogether it was a bad job; but it served Junot right. He was a coward and a brute into the bargain; and, although we are all compelled to do dirty jobs occasionally, he had a bungling way of doing things, which was repeatedly getting him into trouble. It is such men as he that bring disgrace upon us, and I can't say I am sorry for his fate—I hope the loss will not fall very heavily upon you. By the way, I forgot

to say that there were two negro babies found in the cabin of the Dolphin—which have been sent to Sierra Leone—the only portion of the freight found on board. * * * * *

“Pooh!” said the merchant as he concluded the extract. “What the D—l. I mean what is it to me whether any negro babies were found or not. I shall lose a pretty penny by the affair—although fortunately the loss will not fall altogether on me. That, however, is not the worst of it. It may lead to inquiries which may not be pleasant. Well, well; bad news never comes single. I am a good deal more annoyed at Seymour’s strange conduct than I am at the loss of the Dolphin. I had made up my mind to that—” and Mr. Mordant folded up the letter; placed it in the bundle and carefully locked it up in his desk. Then again seating himself in his arm-chair, he gazed pensively into the evening twilight, while the contortion of the muscles of his face, the knitting of his brows, and the nervous twitching of the lines around his closely compressed lips, showed evidently that his mind was ill at ease. There were other matters of weighty moment pressing upon him and paralyzing his energies and distracting his thoughts at that moment, besides the singular and inexplicable behavior of Seymour, and the loss of the Dolphin. He kept muttering almost inaudibly to himself. At length he spoke aloud, but still in a low tone of voice :

“I wish,” he said, “I could get clear of that scoundrel Harvey. I don’t half like his manner of late. I am almost sorry I gave him that money; and yet I could not avoid it, without giving up the property. I had better have done that, if I could have been sure that he would have held his tongue afterwards; but he has me in his power, and I can see intends to use that power to suit his own ends. I begin to think Mrs. Miller has heard something about this business. Her manner was very strange when she called at the office yesterday—”

There was a knock at the door of the library.

“Come in,” said the merchant, and a servant entered with a letter on a silver tray.

“A letter for you, sir,” said he. “The person who brought it is waiting below.”

Mr. Mordant opened the letter, and a tailor’s bill fell from the inside. He picked it up without looking at it; and laying it on the table, commenced to read the letter. It was as follows :—

“—— BROADWAY,

RESPECTED SIR :—The exceeding tightness of the money market, just now, compels me to make an appeal to you, in the hope that you will use your influence to induce Mr. Charles to settle the enclosed account, now current for two years. I have a large sum to make up by the 1st inst., and if I am unable to raise the money, I shall be compelled to go into the Bankrupt Court. I am sorry to say that this distress on my part has been brought about by the impossibility of obtaining payment of my accounts with several young gentlemen, who, like Mr. Charles Mordant, have got deeply in my debt, and who, as is the case with him, have not made any settlement for years. I make this appeal, confident that you will see the necessity of settling the account, as the disclosure that must necessarily be made, should my books come before the court, must, of course, be unpleasant to a young gentleman in your son's social position. I am sorry to add, that I made a last urgent request to your son yesterday, when he told me to ‘go to the d—l!’ I had no other resource left but to apply to you.

Yours, very respectfully,

“———

“ C. Mordant, Esq.”

The reader is not to suppose that the worthy tradesman meant anything by the innuendo that he had innocently blundered upon in the latter portion of his letter to the merchant. It was merely a clumsily-constructed sentence, on reading which, vexed as he was, the merchant could not forbear smiling. The smile, however, soon gave place to a frown, as he took up the account and examined it.

“Thirteen hundred and sixty-two dollars, seventy-five cents!” said he, in a tone of amazement, “for two years’ purchase of clothing at his tailor’s; and Charles has an allowance of three thousand a year! Good gracious! why the boy must be the veriest spendthrift on earth—besides, not a month ago, he came to me and pleaded to having overdrawn his allowance, and begged five hundred dollars, which, after a severe lecture, I gave him, to discharge this very tailor’s bill. I must see Mr. —— about this, and talk to Charles. It will never do, though, as things stand at present, to allow the debt to be proven in Court. The man must be paid, I suppose. “Thomas,” addressing the servant, tell Mr. —— I will call at his store on my way to town, to-morrow.”

"Yes, sir," said the man, and he retired to deliver the message.

In a few minutes he returned.

"Mr. Douglass is waiting below, sir, and if you are disengaged, he would like to see you."

"Confounded bore!" muttered the merchant. "Tell him I am busy, Thomas, and ask him if he will call again. Some demand for payment to some religious charity, I suppose. No — stay, Thomas; ask Mr. Douglass to walk up stairs."

"It is as well to settle these things promptly; they are necessary expenditures, and turn to a profitable account," he added to himself, as the man quitted the room. "I have spent thousands in this way; but I don't know that they haven't paid good interest."

Mr. Douglass was shown up stairs and entered the room, and was received with great suavity by Mr. Mordant.

"Take a seat, Mr. Douglass," said he; "I am glad to see you. A call, I presume, for my subscription to some of those charities in which you interest yourself so much?"

"You have guessed right, sir," said Mr. Douglass. "And I am happy to say that you, Mr. Mordant, are amongst those upon whom the directors of charitable societies can always reckon. The money is not forced from you, but is offered freely and with good will. Oh! Mr. Mordant, I wish more of our wealthy citizens were like you in that respect, although I should not complain, for, let people say what they may of the inherent selfishness of human nature, my mission brings me into contact with men and women whose charitable feelings are spontaneous, and who readily give of their abundance to the relief of their less fortunate fellow-creatures. If there is much evil in the world, Mr. Mordant, there is also much that is good. America, and New York particularly, lack not individuals of truly charitable natures, to whom to give is the greatest pleasure."

Mr. Douglass, who was a philanthropist in the true sense of the word, a man who, although possessed of but moderate means himself, had devoted his energies to the cause of religion and religion's chief beauty, "Heaven-born charity," spoke truly. There were, no doubt, many amongst those whom he classed in his list of generous benefactors to the poor, who, like Mr. Mordant, gave freely, not for charity's nor religion's, but for ostentation's sake; but there were and are many also, to whom to

give is the greatest pleasure and whose life is spent in seeking to do good. Many amongst those, who, to the eye of the world, seem to be mere votaries of pleasure—who “do good by stealth and blush to find it fame,” especially amongst the female sex, whose unwearied labors in the cause of charity in the city of New York and other cities of the Union, constitute their greatest charm and their highest glory. It has been our province to paint various characters in no estimable light ; but we do not necessarily, by so doing, assume that there is no virtue amongst mankind—above all, amongst womankind. If there is much fashionable dissipation and frivolity, there is also much self-denial and much expenditure of labor in the cause of virtue. Long may such labors continue to shed a lustre amongst us, and to gild the gloom of the Sodom-and-Gomorrhah-like darkness which would otherwise overwhelm us.

But this is a digression. Let us return to the thread of our narrative.

“What is the object of your present call ?” inquired Mr. Mordant, endeavoring to assume a pleasing smile and a benevolent expression of countenance.

“Your yearly subscription to the Bible Society is due, Mr. Mordant. It is on that account I have called particularly ; but I wish also to bring under your notice the state of distress to which a poor, and I believe, an honest and worthy family have been brought in consequence of the sudden death of their only support—the father—a mechanic, who was lately killed by that sad steamboat explosion. He leaves a sick wife and six small children quite destitute.”

“Put me down for \$25,” said Mr. Mordant.

“I have not done yet,” continued Mr. Douglass, smilingly ; “knowing your anti-slavery principles, sir, I thought you a fitting person to apply to, to aid a few philanthropists who wish to purchase the freedom of the wife and child of an escaped fugitive from Southern slavery, who has happily reached Canada in safety, and who has already, by his own exertion, saved \$200 for that purpose ; the sum demanded by the master of the woman and child is \$900. I am happy to say, we have raised \$600, which, with the \$200 saved by the husband and father, who, I think it nothing but right, should contribute himself, will make \$800. I have a promise of \$50 more, in two donations of \$25 each, and I thought it might perhaps afford you pleasure to unite with us in the good work.”

"I will give the other \$50. I fancy I saw the names of the other donors in the *Journal of Commerce* this morning?" said Mr. Mordant.

"You did, sir, and you will have the pleasure of seeing the amount of your own generous donation added to the rest to-morrow morning. Sir, you will have aided in causing the heart of an almost widowed husband, and a father, who has long been deprived of a father's greatest delight, to leap for joy. Again, Mr. Mordant, I say, that though, thank God! there are many—I would there were more like you."

Mr. Mordant filled up a check for \$125, and Mr. Douglass, having cordially grasped the merchant's hand, quitted the room.

"Well, I have got off comparatively easy this time," said Mr. Mordant, when the worthy man had gone. "One thing is satisfactory—all these donations are of a nature to appear in the public prints, and the trifle will not be lost. But really—"

What Mr. Mordant was about to add, we must leave to the reader's imagination, as he was interrupted in his soliloquy by the entrance of the servant again into the room, with the silver tray in his hand.

"A letter, sir, from Mr. Grindley," said he.

Mr. Mordant received the letter, opened it, and read as follows:

— Nassau Street.

"DEAR SIR:—I called at your office this afternoon, but you had left before I arrived. I should wish to see you *alone* to-morrow at eleven o'clock, A.M. I am afraid we shall get into some trouble respecting the capture of the *Dolphin*—which misfortune you have already been advised of. I have written this evening, in order that you may not make any other engagement at that hour to-morrow. *The emergency is pressing*, or I would have called at — Place to-night myself; but I am busy raking up and arranging all letters and bills, etc., relating to that unfortunate vessel. If you have any of the documents at your house, please bring them with you to-morrow.

Yours, truly,

"C. MORDANT, Esq.

JOHN GRINDLEY."

The merchant crumpled the letter fiercely in his hand. It seemed as though some dark plot to effect his ruin were thickening around him, but he spoke not a word; he sat for some

moments absorbed in thought—then burning the letter by the flame of the candle on the table, he threw it on the hearth, and watched it until the last glittering spark had vanished, and the blackened and charred fragments alone remained.

“I will go and join my family in the parlor,” thought he, then. “If I remain here any longer, I shall go mad—mad;” and he rose from his seat, extinguished the candles, and descended to the parlor. He found his wife in a great state of consternation, and his daughter Mary weeping bitterly. Mr. Mordant was usually a man, outwardly, of calm demeanor. He seldom gave way to fits of passion—at home never; but he had already suffered various vexations, and now that he had come, hoping to forget his annoyances for a time, in the bosom of his family, and had found them in the condition described, he could no longer control himself.

“What is the meaning of this?” he demanded furiously.

Mrs. Mordant, without uttering a word, placed an open note, beautifully written on embossed paper, in his hand. He read as follows :—

TORONTO, C. W., July 11, 18—.

DEAR PAPA AND MAMMA :—Forgive your erring child, I know you will, after your first flush of anger is past. *I could not live without my Henry's love.* And he, poor fellow, threatened to *drown himself* if I hesitated to become his wife. And he *would* have done so—I am sure he *would*—for he is *so romantic* in his notions of affection. And he knew that, poor as he is, you would never give a consent to our union. Dear papa and mamma—he *was almost crazy*, he tells me, after you discharged him from the house, on account of what *you considered* our *imprudent* attachment; and when I went to my aunt's at Albany, he followed me. He used to watch me, *he tells me, at my bed-room window*, anxious to catch *only one* glimpse of my form as I was about retiring to rest, for *nights and nights* together; and, at last, he ventured to meet me, and speak to me, when I was taking my walks on the Troy road—*Such an object of pity.* I am sure *you* would have pitied him had you seen him—haggard, and pale, and shabby, and his lovely beard and moustache all ragged, and actually turned *red*! He says the color changed in a single night, for love of me. And *so* shabby, poor fellow! He had not the *heart* to dress himself tidily, thinking that I scorned him. I promised to see him the next day at the same hour. *What else could I do?* I could

not witness the wreck *I* had made without feeling commiseration. I begged him, however, to attire himself with greater propriety, so that our meetings might not create impertinent observation, and he said he would ; but in his frantic eagerness to see me, he had left his wardrobe in New York, and had actually come down—*only think of that!*—without bringing any money with him beyond what he needed for his travelling expenses. I immediately *lent* him the hundred dollars you gave me when I left home. *What else could I do?* And my dear Henry ‘looked himself again.’ When next I met him, which was on the following morning, even his beard and moustache had regained their original, glossy black. He said it was the reaction of feeling. *I have read of such changes, in poetry* ;—does not Byron say, ‘My hair turned white in a single night ;’ and dear papa and mamma, in a moment of love’s intoxication, I consented to elope with him to Canada—and yesterday we were married—and now, I and my dear husband sue to you for forgiveness. My dearest Henry has disposed of my jewels for me, to supply our immediate necessities—*Pawned them*, he says, that is, put them *somewhere*, where we can get them again when we have the money to *redeem them*, which, believing in your affection, I hope will be *soon*, and that papa will send us a letter inviting us to throw ourselves at your feet and take *your blessing* which we are both *all anxiety* to receive. Dear Mamma, you *can’t think* how Henry is admired here; everybody says he is such a *love* of a man; but we are beginning to want money already. So pray write us soon, or the hearts of both *Henry and myself* will be broken.

“Your erring, disobedient, yet still affectionate daughter,
SARAH.”

“P. S.—Henry wished me to unite his love with mine, in remembrance towards you. The *dear fellow* says he can readily conceive how papa should be angry, on finding that a humble music master was seeking his daughter’s hand—but he can just as readily *forgive* him. Is that not *noble* and *self-sacrificing* on his part?

“P. P. S.—I forgot to say that *Dear Henry* tells me he is in this country under an assumed name. He is a *nobleman*, and his estates lie *somewhere or other* in some place with a strange name that I can’t pronounce, in Germany. He was driven from his country in consequence of his having taken a popular part in the late struggle for liberty ; but he hopes *some day* to be restored to them. His right name—(he has written it

down in pencil for me so that I may spell it correctly,) is Ludwig Von Kemperblossen, and he is a *Count*. In that case, dear papa and mamma, your erring child is a *Countess*. Only think of that! S."

Mr. Mordant stormed and raged furiously; he even ventured so far as to break out into several oaths, that terrified his wife and daughter—and blamed the former for bringing the German swindler into the house. Poor Mrs. Mordant began to weep as freely as her daughter, and the merchant, with the crumpled note in his hand—rushed from the room, and going up stairs to his library again—locked himself in and flung himself down on the sofa—where he remained throughout the night.

The mother and daughter, after weeping their fill, retired to their bed-rooms; but not much sleep visited the eyelids of the Mordant family that night.

CHAPTER XXII.

Which treats of Strange Matters, involving not a little Mystery.

IN a former chapter we stated that the U. S. ship G——, had put into Sierra Leone, after having cruised for some time up and down the coast without having been fortunate enough to meet with any slavers; and there Miss Herbert was provided with a passage to New Orleans on board an American bark that fortunately happened then to be on the point of sailing. Poor Charlotte was glad enough at the prospect of reaching America again, after having so long been tossed about on the coast of Africa, and subjected to the confinement of a ship of war, which, although the captain sought to make things as comfortable to her as possible, was, at the best, no very pleasant abode for a young female who had no companions of her own sex on board. Still, she had been treated so kindly, and had met with so much attention, that she could not help feeling sorrowful at the thought of parting; and, perhaps, the future that she had to look forward to was not of the brightest. We might lift the curtain now and disclose it; but it would be premature, as by so doing we should forestall the events of our story. She had formed an especial friendship for the young midshipman, Thomas Miller; and, although she was not likely

to meet with any of his friends, bound, as the vessel in which she was about to sail was, to a Southern port of the Union—the young man had obtained a promise from her to be the bearer of numerous letters, which she was to post in New Orleans, and had also intrusted to her several messages to be delivered personally, should she chance, by any fortune, to be placed in the vicinity of his home.

The bark in which Charlotte was to sail had loosened her foretopsail, and the anchor was nearly apeak; the boat was alongside ready to carry her on board; she had bade farewell to the captain and officers, and was preparing to step over the side on the ladder, assisted by one of the lieutenants, when she recollected that she had left a parcel intrusted to her care by young Miller, in the gun-room, and she stepped below to fetch it. The young man was on shore on boat duty, and she had wished him good by an hour before. The parcel she went in search of had been laid by the youngster in his chest, and he had desired her to lift the lid and take possession of it when she was ready to go. It was a packet of letters to his mother and several of his young friends at home; and on raising the lid of the chest Miss Herbert was surprised to see her ring (as she thought), lying in the till.

“How came this ring here?” she thought aloud.

“Ah! I recollect—I must have dropped it while packing up those papers for Mr. Miller. I took it from my bosom, where I usually keep it suspended by a ribbon, with the intention of packing it in my trunk. It is fortunate that I happened to come for this package of letters myself, or I should have gone away without it,” and taking it up she placed it in her pocket, ascended the ladder to the deck, was assisted into the boat alongside, and in a few minutes was on board the bark Susan Shooter—and sailing out of the harbor with a fine fair breeze. The sloop of war Buzzard, which had captured the Dolphin—after she had been disabled by the pampero, arrived in Sierra Leone while the G—— was lying there, and the two captains met several times together. On one occasion, the commander of the Buzzard recounted to captain P——, the particulars relative to the capture of the prize. “By-the-by,” he continued, after he had told the story, “we are close here by the hospital, suppose you step in with me and see the two negro babies, which I brought from on board the slaver. They must have been great pets of that atrocious wretch, Junot, for the fellow had them hidden in his own bed in his cabin. They were

soundly sleeping, poor little things, when my first lieutenant took possession of the slaver, and he brought them still asleep on board. They soon became great pets with my crew, and were nursed as carefully—until we arrived in port—as ever they could have been by their own mother, poor, unfortunate creature, who, I fear now is sleeping her last sleep in the depths of the Atlantic; for, no doubt, she was one of the miserable victims of the incarnate devil's cruelty. By G—, sir, the man who turned evidence against the scoundrel—it makes my blood boil when I think of it—that man, sir, I understand, proved before the court at St. Helena, that the villain Junot, who murdered in cold blood the whole of the prize crew that had been put on board his infernal craft, actually sunk upwards of two hundred negroes, out of his lee port holes, not an hour before I came alongside of him. Had I known the facts at the time, I hardly think I should have stopped to parley with him. No, sir,” and the captain of the sloop-of-war fairly ground his teeth together with passionate indignation. “No, sir, I should have poured a broadside into him at once, and sent him and his devilish crew to the bottom at once; and, if I should have done wrong, why, sir, the authorities might have made the most of it. However, the villain has met his reward.”

“The scoundrel deserved his fate,” said Captain P——; “but come—where are these said negro babies, who so singularly escaped the fate of the rest of the living cargo?”

“Come in and see them,” answered the captain of the sloop-of-war. “They are in the children's ward. I fancy they must be twins; and they are as pretty, interesting specimens of black humanity as can be found, if you were to search the African Continent. They must belong to a superior race to the generality of negroes, for they are really handsome little creatures—black as a coal, but with beautifully formed limbs and sleek skins, and they possess the finest and most intelligent eyes I ever saw in the head of a human being.”

While the captain of the sloop-of-war was still expatiating upon the beauty of the children, he and his companion had entered the ward of the hospital, and had approached the cot where the infants lay. Captain P—— was himself astonished at their beauty, and could not forbear making remarks upon the subject aloud. He was overheard by one of the directors of the hospital, who happened to be near, and this gentleman joined the two captains.

“Yes,” he remarked, “they are very handsome children.

It's my opinion they belong to the *Yunga Jagos* tribe—a race of negroes remarkable for their intelligence and physical perfection. You perceive that although they possess, unmistakeably, the negro contour of feature, there is nothing coarse or repulsive about them. The expression is softened down, and, but for their color, they would be considered handsome. Now, I have seen some of the *Yunga Jagos* women, and they are really beautiful, if one could get over the prejudice of color. There was one here the other day, brought in by one of our cruisers; the poor thing had either sprung overboard or been thrown overboard from a slaver, of which the cruiser was in chase, and the man-of-war picked her up. She was greatly distressed, so we learnt from some of the negroes here, who partially understood her language, for the loss of her two children, who had, she said, been shipped on board another vessel. She told about their having been thrown to the lions on her way down from the interior to the slave coast, and subsequently picked up unharmed, for she is certain *she heard them cry* when she was being taken on board. Now, this may be all fancy, you know, but it is a singular coincidence that these two children should be brought in from another slaver, only a day or two after the woman was sent to Free Town. There is something quite romantic about it, and I have sent to the governor of Free Town, requesting him to send the woman back here, in order that she may see the children, and, if they are hers, they will of course be restored to her. I promise myself quite a tragic scene, I assure you."

The two captains left the hospital, and a day or two afterwards the G—— sailed for the southern coast. While in the Gulf of Guinea, the wind became light and baffling, and the captain found himself driven by the current out of his course, and within a few leagues of the island of Annabon. The idea came into his head to pay the lady of Annabon another visit.

"What say you, Mr. Miller," said he, jokingly, to the young midshipman, who happened to be on duty on the quarter-deck; "would you have any objection to pay the fair recluse of Annabon a second visit?"

"Indeed I should not, sir," exclaimed the youth, with such vivacity that the captain was greatly amused.

"Well, then, we will haul our wind and steer for the land. Get yourself ready, and I will send you again as an *avant courier* to the fairy of the isle."

The youth needed no second bidding; he went below, attired himself in full rig, and, before the ship was in sight of the inlet, reported himself ready.

"Then jump into the boat, and carry the lady a message from me to the same purport as the last; and mind, youngster, don't lose your heart altogether before you come on board again."

Young Miller descended into the boat, and in a few minutes sprang on the beach, and hurried off in the direction of the locality of the cottage.

In the course of an hour and a half he was back on board the frigate again.

"Come on board, sir," said he, giving the usual salute.

"Well, sir, and what says the lady?"

"If you please, sir, I can't find her."

"Can't find her! Is she not in the cottage?"

"The cottage is no longer there, sir."

"Why, boy," said the captain, laughing, "this witch has driven you crazy. Do you know what you are talking about?"

"Yes, sir. I have seen one of the negroes, who speaks a few words of English. He says that the *Obeah* burned the cottage with fire from heaven, and that the lady was spirited away. The negroes have all left the neighborhood. None of them will reside there now; but I saw the place where the cottage stood, and the ground and trees are burned and charred all around the spot."

"By Jove! the boy's crazy, I declare," exclaimed the captain; but observing that the youth looked greatly troubled and perplexed, he added, "I will go on shore myself. Stay in the boat, my lads," addressing the men alongside. "And you, Mr. Miller, had better remain on board. If I find the lady, I promise you, since you appear to take her loss so much to heart, you shall visit her."

The captain went on shore and bent his footsteps towards the cottage, and to his astonishment he found it was as the young midshipman had reported. Not a vestige of the recently lovely residence and beautiful garden was to be found. Even the cottages of the negroes in the vicinity were vacated, and where, but a short time before, all was life and beauty, was now gloom and desolation. The captain fell in with the negro who had furnished young Miller with his information. The man could speak very little English, but the captain made out that he believed the *Obeah* had carried off the lady

and blighted the spot. He spoke of strange sights seen there at night, and endeavored to explain many strange stories of negro superstition. (Seymour was now believed by the simple negroes to be the *Obeah*—a being partaking of the attributes both of a god and a devil—in human form). “And the *Obeah*,” said the negro, “who had brought the lady there many years ago, and who was so mighty and rich that he could make people bow and fall dead by the glance of his eye, had taken affront, because so many white folks had been of late to see the lady, and he had cursed the place, and flown away with the lady in the midst of the fire he had created by his breath.” This was all that could be got out of him respecting Zuleika, for the man seemed afraid to speak on the subject, and threw frightened glances towards the spot as he told his story. This, as the reader will be aware, was the impression Seymour sought to create, by removing Zuleika secretly, and burning the residence in which she had resided. He wished to throw as much mystery as possible upon the matter.

Captain P——, however, had his own opinion, and he had no doubt that, as the negro had said, the lady’s husband, father, or lover—what or whoever he might be—had received intimation, perhaps from herself, that visitors had grown numerous, and had consequently removed her, and sought to create this impression amongst the negroes. This, however, was not all the mystery. The negro added that the *Obeah* had sunk a vessel in the bay that night by blowing upon it, and all but one man had sunk with it. The survivor was the captain, who had somehow made his escape, and had been seen wandering upon the beach the day afterwards; but the negroes were afraid to speak to him, for the curse of the *Obeah* was upon him, and he had wandered into the woods, and whether he had died there or not the negro did not know. Perhaps he had gone to the other side of the island, and gone away in some vessel.

This was a strange story altogether, and much increased the mystery around the White Lady of Annabon; but it was all the captain could learn, and he returned on board the vessel, and related the tale to his wondering officers.

“If you please, sir, could I speak with you alone?” asked young Miller, touching his cap.

“Certainly,” replied the captain. “What do you wish to tell me—anything concerning the vanished lady?”

“Yes, sir,” answered the youth.

"Oh, it is, is it?" answered the captain; "out with it, then?"

"It's a long story, sir, but I'll make it as short as possible. This lady, whoever she was, when we were here before, sent me a letter and a ring—"

"The d—l she did!" interrupted the captain. "That was rapid correspondence and quick courtship, in all conscience, seeing you had only seen her twice, both times on the same day."

"Please hear me out, sir. She sent me a letter, and a ring, for which she said she had no use, as she was my sister—"

The captain burst out into a fit of laughter.

"Very reasonable indeed of the lady," said he, at length. "She sent you a ring, because, being your sister, of course she couldn't be your wife; but who gave her the ring, boy? You, I presume, on the occasion of your first visit. Prompt work, Mr. Miller, prompt work. Well?"

"She wasn't my sister, sir, and the ring was a ring that my mother wore on her finger the very day I left home."

Again the captain roared with laughter.

"The boy's crazy," said he, as soon as he could speak.

"Do, pray, sir, hear me out," begged the youth. "This ring, which was of singular appearance, and which had the first letter of my sister Jane's name engraved inside, I placed for safety in the till of my chest. I have never looked at it particularly since; but I could almost swear it must have been there yesterday, and I always keep the till of my chest locked."

"Well," interrupted the captain, seeing the youth hesitate.

"If you please, sir, the ring has been spirited away, I believe, while I was on shore just now. When I came on board, after finding that the lady was gone, I went for the first time, after we left Sierra Leone, to look at this ring. It was gone; and yet, since we left port, the till has been locked and the key has been in my pocket. And what's more, it was locked just now."

"The boy's mad for certain," said the captain. "How came the girl to know you had a sister? Have you one?"

"I did have, sir, but she is dead or missing—no one knows where."

A sudden idea seemed to strike the captain. It might be the missing sister of the youth, after all, and she might have recognized him on his visit on shore.

"How long has your sister been missing?" he asked.

"A few months only before I left home."

"Then you would know her were you to see her?"

"Know Jane, sir! To be sure I would."

"Is she anything like this lady?"

"Like *her*, sir! no more than I am. She is taller, stouter, and of darker complexion." The idea born of the captain's brain fell to the ground. The recluse of Annabon could not by any chance have been the missing girl.

"And where do you suppose your ring is?" he asked.

"On my mother's finger, in New York," said the youth, "where it came from."

"The boy is certainly crazy," thought the captain, shaking his head. "You said you had a letter from the lady, as well as the ring. Where is the letter?"

"Here, sir," said the youth, taking the crumpled sheet from his pocket.

The captain took it and read it, and was as much perplexed as the boy himself.

"There is some mystery about this I cannot fathom," he said. "The letter, at any rate, seems to be genuine."

He gave it back. "Keep that letter, Mr. Miller," said he; "it may furnish, some day, a clue to the history of this strange being; but, for heaven's sake, don't tell any one else, or you will never hear the last of it. How could it be possible that the ring could come into this girl's possession—or how could it get out of yours? That girl has bewitched you, and you have been dreaming, till you have believed your dreams to be reality."

"I am no more dreaming than you are," muttered the youth to himself, as, touching his cap respectfully to the captain, he walked away.

The captain said nothing about the letter to the officers, and young Miller, finding how little he had gained by informing the captain of the witchcraft to which he believed he had been subjected, kept his own counsel for the future. He determined to write, however, and after telling the story to his mother, to ask, if for any time during his absence, she had missed, or laid aside the ring, and whether she still possessed it.

For a long time after this, the singular circumstances connected with the White Lady of Annabon, and her strange and mysterious disappearance, were fruitful themes of discourse amongst the officers at the mess table.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Wherein the Scenes depicted are laid in another quarter of the Globe.—
The Reader is introduced to Zuleika's new home.

"Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime,
Where the rage of the Vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?

* * * * *

"'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land of the Sun,
Will he smile on the deeds that his children have done?
Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell,
Are the deeds that they do, and the tales that they tell."

Bride of Abydos—Opening Canto.

Two months had passed since we left Zuleika on board her husband's vessel, on the north side of the Island of Annabon, and in a preceding chapter we have mentioned how, in his letter to Mr. Mordant, Seymour stated his intention to resign for a while the command of the Albatross, and go to the Mediterranean, for what purpose he did not choose to tell.

We have mentioned also that Seymour, at an earlier period of his life, had been engaged on board a Greek pirate vessel. In the first instance more from necessity than from inclination—and that he had distinguished himself by his reckless courage, and acquired his thorough knowledge of seamanship amongst the Islands of the Grecian Archipelago.

At the entrance of the Gulf of Salonica in the Ægean Sea are situated a group of small islands, comprising the north-westernmost portion of the Cyclades. Many of these islands are fertile in the extreme, others are comparatively barren, but all are exceedingly picturesque; located in that glorious clime, and on the bosom of that sunny sea, they could scarcely be otherwise. Most of them are inhabited by fishermen, generally of the Greek race, although a few Mohammedan renegades may be found amongst them. The inhabitants are generally poor; that is, they possess no articles of luxury—they need them not—they would not know how to use them; but poor to destitution they are not, for the sea that washes the shores of these rocky islets abounds with fish and furnishes an abundance of food at the cost of little trouble, and the fertile soil almost spontaneously provides such vegetables and fruits as the appetites of the simple, rude islanders require. For centuries past

the Cyclades have been noted for being the strong-holds of pirates, whose deeds of valor and ferocity have been the theme of many a minstrel's song ; but these strong-holds were generally located amongst the more southerly and larger islands of the Archipelago. On one of these islands—one of the smallest, yet one of the most picturesque of the group—one so small, so insignificant that geographers have not given it a name—Seymour, whose earlier career had rendered him well acquainted with the tortuous windings and intricate channels of this beautiful yet treacherous sea, had fixed the abode of his fair bride, and scorning the uncouth name given to the islet by the Greek fishermen, he called it “Zuleika's Isle.”

He had sailed from St. Louis on the African coast, as he had intimated to Mr. Mordant, to Marseilles ; thence, still taking Jane Miller, as Zuleika's companion, he had taken passage to Mileto, where he had purchased a Greek felucca, and having stored it with everything he thought immediately necessary or desirable for the comfort or gratification of Zuleika, he had engaged a crew of Greek sailors, and himself taking the command of the little craft, had steered his way amongst the Cyclades until he had reached this island, which, from its position, its fertility, and its picturesque beauty, he had chosen for the new abode of his bride.

Seymour had a sufficiency of money at his command. During his successful career in the slave trade, he had had abundant opportunity to amass wealth, and reckless as he appeared, he had ever cherished a hope that one day—and that day, at least, before the noontide of manhood had passed away—he might be enabled to retire from the sea, and perchance, reform his life, and spend his later years happily in the society of his beloved Zuleika ; consequently he readily obtained control over the rude and simple people amongst whom he was about to locate himself ; and before he had been many days upon the island, he was looked upon by the few fishermen and their families as its lord and master.

At the door of a small cottage—which, although originally built in the rude style of the huts on the island, had, in the course of a few weeks, been so much improved and beautified under the direction of Seymour, as to render it not only a comfortable, but, in comparison with the other habitations of the island, a luxurious abode—one evening, about a month after they had landed and taken possession, sat Seymour and Zuleika, beneath a rustic porch tresselled with grape vines

and honey-suckles ; before them, at the distance of a few hundred yards, was the sea, and a short distance from the shore lay the felucca that had been purchased to bring them to the island, and which was still retained by Seymour, who had frequently made excursions amongst the "Thousand Islands," with Zuleika and Jane Miller, since they had taken up their abode in this spot. The crew of the felucca, who chose to live on board, were singing a Greek chorus, and the melody of their voices—so pure was the air—was distinctly heard where Seymour and his wife were sitting. Jane Miller was wandering pensively along the shore, gazing at the golden sunset, and admiring the beautiful effect of its fading beams upon the water ; here glistening like a sea of molten silver where it was open to the west, and there, dark in comparison, as a Lethean stream, where the dark shadows of the craggy islets and rocks, shut out its dying rays. In sooth, it was a glorious scene, and the fairy vista and the sunset hour had their effect upon the minds of the gazers. Perchance it imparted to them a tinge of melancholy, for both sat silent for some time, watching the receding orb of day, sinking like a ball of fire into the ocean, deeper and deeper still, until the last expiring ray had disappeared, and the stars shone out, and the moon sailed in queenly beauty through the transparent atmosphere ; and, as if touched by the fairy hand of an enchanter, the entire scene appeared to have undergone a magical transformation—and now the boatmen had ceased their evening song, and a solemn stillness pervaded the island, unbroken, save by the gentle murmur of the billows as they broke in tiny waves upon the pebbly beach ; then Seymour spoke.

"And how do you like this our new abode, my Zuleika?" he asked, drawing the girl closer to him by the hand he had hitherto held clasped in his own, and passing his left arm around her slender form.

"How can I do otherwise than like it, George?" she replied, "am not I a Greek girl? I know not how it is; perhaps it is mere instinct—the effect of my breathing again my native air—but since I have been here, I have been happier than I ever was before. I like the savage beauty of this scenery—better, far better than the gorgeous scenery of Annabon. And then, George, you are here with me, and have staid longer with me than you have ever done before at any one time. Perhaps it is that which makes me so lightsome and joyous."

An expression of pain shot across the features of Seymour,

but he made no reply, and Zuleika, after sitting some moments silent, continued—

“How beautiful is night upon the sea-shore! Does not the vista before us look like a scene of enchantment? Let us walk down to the beach, George, and join Harry, there. I think I like our night rambles best, and yet all seasons are beautiful as they come. I will tell you a secret, George. I have written a song in Spanish and tuned it to the accompaniment of the guitar, and to-night when we return I will sing it to you.”

“So you are a poetess?” said Seymour, smiling fondly upon the young girl as he rose from his seat to accompany her to the beach.

“Oh, sometimes I try to write down my thoughts and set them to music, but my attempts are but feeble. I tried to write English, George, but I am not yet sufficiently mistress of your native tongue—so you must translate my song into English poetry for me.”

“Do you like the English language, Zuleika?”

“I like it because it is your native tongue.”

“And for nothing else?”

“Yes, but for that most; but I like to read English poetry—still I think my native Greek, and even my adopted Spanish more melodious.”

“Ah! what is that?” said Seymour, as they passed by a thick copse of trees, whence issued a tall female form, gliding past them almost like a spectre and rapidly disappearing amidst the gloom.

“It is that strange woman, George, who comes here from one of the other islands, to dispose of mats and other articles she weaves from rushes. The fishermen say she is a witch and they fear and avoid her.”

“I have never seen her before,” said Seymour.

“She has come several times near our cottage when you were away in the felucca—but I have never seen her face. She seems to watch me closely and yet to wish to avoid me. I should be frightened, George, if you were not with me, to meet her at this hour.”

Seymour smiled—“I don’t suppose, darling, there is anything for you to be alarmed at in the poor woman. Some poor creature, I suppose, who has become childish with age. The people of these islands are very superstitious.”

They passed on to the beach and met Jane Miller, who was returning towards the cottage. She turned back with them,

and after a short ramble on the margin of the shore, they returned to their abode.

"Now, love," said Seymour, "bring your guitar and let me hear you sing the song you spoke of, and to-morrow I will endeavor to do my part and translate it into English."

Zuleika passed into the cottage for the purpose of procuring her guitar, leaving Seymour and Jane, or Harry, as the young woman was now always called by Zuleika as well as Seymour, sitting in the porch. In a few moments she returned with the instrument, but she was frightened and almost breathless, and laying down the guitar, she threw herself into her husband's arms.

"Zuleika, darling, what ails you?" asked Seymour, while Jane rose from her seat and came forward anxious to render assistance.

"That strange woman! dear George. She was looking in the little window of our bedroom when I went to fetch the guitar, and she shook her head menacingly at me, and then disappeared."

"Poor little, timid thing," said Seymour, kissing her cheek, "you should not be so easily alarmed. The old woman can do you no harm, at least, while I am here to protect you; but I will see to her, darling, to-morrow, and take precautions to prevent her returning to the island. No doubt, as I observed before, she is some poor, half-crazed creature. Now, where is the guitar, dear?"

"You will excuse me from singing the song to-night, dear George. I know how silly it is; but I was so shocked when I saw that woman shake her long, skinny arm at me, that my heart flew to my throat. I would rather not sing, to-night, George."

"Just as you please, love, but you will sing me that song to-morrow. I must hear it."

"I will sing it as often as you please."

"Well, then we will retire for the night; the sun has gone down more than an hour, and I warrant all the people on the island, except this bugbear of an old woman, are fast asleep. I have a score to settle with the old witch for frightening you, love, and depriving me of the song, and Harry, too."

"Oh, Harry has heard it," said Zuleika, looking up into her husband's face, and smiling.

"So you gave him the preference, eh?"

"I sung it to him first, that I might be able to sing it the

more perfectly to you, dear; that's all," said Zuleika, smiling archly.

"You are a dear little flatterer," was Seymour's reply, as they entered the cottage together.

Ere another hour had passed every human being, save one, on Zuleika's Isle, was wrapped in slumber—that one was the mysterious old woman already alluded to. It was near the hour of midnight when she again approached the cottage and peered in at the window; the moonbeams were shining through the casement and casting their faint light full on the faces of the unconscious sleepers. The woman gazed long and earnestly, and then noiselessly retired, muttering almost inaudibly to herself in the Romaic dialect.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Meeting with Marca—The Ancient Sibyl of the Archipelago, and her Daughter Zoe.

THE morning dawned, sweetly as the summer morning ever dawns upon the beautiful islands of the *Ægean* sea, which, blessed with a fertile soil, a beautiful and delightful climate and scenery of a wild and savage, yet beautiful and enchanting character, are doubly fascinating to the educated voyager, in consequence of the classical associations connected with them. On one of the group, says tradition at least, was born the prince of poets and minstrels—he whose strains have never been equalled—"the blind old man of Scio's rocky isle." On another (Patmos) the Apostle St. John, wrote, while in exile, the inspired Revelations. All are more or less associated with the most glorious recollections of classical antiquity. Now the abode of poor fishermen and desperate pirates—they were once the cradles of genius and human progress, and he who can sail among the extensive group, and navigate the tortuous windings of their channels, or can wander on their now thinly peopled and neglected soil, with a heart unstirred, must be wanting in soul—we envy not his stolid frigidity.

Zuleika arose with the dawn of day from her light slumbers; the sun, just risen from the deep, was casting his early morning rays through the window of the bed chamber; the sweet briar

and honey suckles which clambered up the side of the cottage, and clung in graceful festoons around the casement, diffused their fragrant perfume throughout the room ; the birds sang their blithe and joyous matin songs ; and the cool breeze, fresh from the sea seemed to impart new vitality to the vegetation and an air of gladness to the scene.

Zuleika opened the casement and gazed abroad ; the sea, calm and smooth as a mirror, lay before her, the sunbeams dancing upon its surface, and dazzling the eye with their brilliancy ; and the gentle breeze as it played amongst the foliage of the trees breathed forth a sweeter and more soul-subduing melody than any that art is capable of producing. The Greek girl turned from the window and stepped to the couch on which Seymour was still reposing.

"Wake love—wake," she said, touching him lightly with her fingers ; "see what a lovely morning. It is a shame to be sleeping while the sun is shining so brightly, and the birds singing so joyously, and all nature looking so glad. Wake, dearest, and let us stroll down to the beach and gather shells and pebbles, and breathe the pure fresh air from the sea."

And Seymour sprang from his couch, and snatching a kiss from the lips of his lovely bride he soon prepared himself to accompany her in her favorite morning ramble.

"We will go to the little grotto by the sea-side beneath the cliff, where there is such a delightful view of the gulf for miles," said he. "And Zuleika, darling, bring your guitar with you, and you shall sing me the song you spoke of, which was so unopportunity interrupted last night. It will sound all the sweeter, love, by the sea-side, where the tiny billows, as they break upon the pebbles and roll up and recede from the beach, will murmur a pleasing chorus.

Zuleika took her guitar, and together they strolled towards the grotto, which was distant about a mile from the cottage, and was a natural cave worn into the rock, at some anterior period—perhaps centuries before—when the sea must have encroached far beyond the boundary of its then high-water mark ; and having reached it, they seated themselves upon a rustic seat studded with sea-shells, and rendered soft and elastic by carefully dried and prepared seaweed, which Seymour, assisted by Zuleika and Jane Miller, had amused themselves with arranging.

"Now, dear, for the song you promised me—where is Harry, though ?"

"He left the cottage before us," replied Zuleika, "he always rises early and wanders into the wood by himself."

"Well, then, he'll lose the song, though, by-the-by, you told me you had already sang it to him. What is its burden, darling?"

"It is merely an idle song relating to every-day occurrences," answered Zuleika. "It is a call, for you to rise early in the morning, dear George; such a call as I gave you this morning—oh! you are a sad sluggard."

"I believe I must plead guilty to that," said Seymour gaily, but he added to himself, "would to God I could sleep as soundly and calmly in the night season as you—poor, innocent, unsuspecting child."

Zuleika, meanwhile, had tuned the guitar, and then she sang the following simple song in Spanish. We have given the translation, roughly made by Seymour, on the following day—which Zuleika exerted herself to commit to memory, because her husband delighted to hear her sing in English—although the task was no light one to one who had but a short time before taken her first lesson in the English tongue :

'Tis sweet to wake from love's bright dreams,
And see the sunrise on the deep,
Illuming with his golden beams
Each mountain slope—each rugged steep—
To watch the shadows of the night
Recede before th' approach of day—
The morning mist, so thin and light,
In feathery vapor floats away.

Rise, love, and from the lattice peep;
Inhale the fresh breeze from the sea;
Come, dearest, rouse thee from thy sleep;
All Nature wakes—then why not we?
Arise, and let us stroll away
Along the margin of the shore,
Or 'midst the fields and copses stray,
Or gather wild flowers on the moor.

The birds are singing in the grove;
The kids are skipping o'er the lea,
And, from the cottage thatch, the dove
Coos forth her sweet, soft melody.
Cool from the sea, the odorous breeze,
Fraught with the perfume of the flowers,
Toys gently 'midst the rustling trees,
Scattering the dew in mimic showers.

Then come, love, ramble forth with me
 Along the margin of the shore;
 Nature rejoiceth—why not we
 Enjoy the glorious matin hour?

'Tis noon—high noon—the sunbeams glow
 With fervent heat; the parched earth
 Sighs vainly for the refreshing dew
 That ushered in the morning's birth.
 Now languid droop the trees and flowers,
 The jaded birds have hushed their song;
 The let *us* pass the noon-tide hours,
 The shady glades and groves among.
 The kids that in the meadows played,
 Now shun the sun's too ardent rays—
 And haunt the pools, or seek the shade,
 Deep in the wood's intricate maze.

Then come, love, let us seek the bowers,
 Whose shade invites us to repose—
 And on a couch of sweet wild-flowers
 Rest, till the day draws near its close,
 The balmy zephyrs softly sleep—
 Stilled are the leaves on every tree—
 Nature her noon *siesta* keeps—
 Hie to the bower then, love, with me.

'Tis eve—and far across the wave
 The sun hath sped his Western path,
 Seeking his fiery orb to lave
 Deep, in the ample ocean bath.
 With all the prism's various hue,
 Gorgeous the many-colored sky—
 And in a sea of azure blue,
 High, o'er our heads, the moon floats by.
 Forth from our bower then let us rove,
 And ramble near the silvery sea;
 Rise from thy long *siesta*, love,
 And breath the balmy air with me.

Zuleika ceased her song, and smilingly looked up into Seymour's face, awaiting his approval.

"I was not aware you were so pretty a poetess, my Zuleika," said he. "I may be partial; but I think that a very pretty song. To-morrow I will try to translate it into English, and then you will learn to sing it in that language, won't you dear? I am afraid that my humble poetic powers will be unable to do justice to the Spanish composition. However, I will do my best. Let us return to breakfast, love. The sun

has been up two hours; it must be eight o'clock. After breakfast I have something to say to you."

They returned to the cottage, and when the simple meal was finished proceeded to busy themselves, assisted by Jane Miller, in the cultivation of a little plot of ground around the cottage, which Seymour had staked in, to form into a garden. Zuleika however, bethought herself of Seymour's remark, that he had something to say to her.

"What was it you wished to speak to me about, dear George?" she asked.

"Come into this little summer house, darling, and I will tell you. I have been a long time staying with you in your new home, Zuleika."

"Oh, it has not seemed long to me; 'tis but a few weeks, George," replied Zuleika, whose cheeks flushed as she spoke in a tremulous voice, for she anticipated what was coming, and dreaded to hear her husband say that he was about to leave her.

"I have stayed with you longer than I ever remained before, dearest, since I left you at school in Spain."

"And you will not leave me again," interrupted Zuleika, placing her hand in that of her husband, her breast heaving with suppressed agitation.

"Zuleika, I must; but I trust it will be for the last time. When I return again, I hope it will be to remain with you always, here, or else I shall take you with me to America."

Zuleika threw herself, weeping, into her husband's arms.

"Compose yourself, darling," he said. "Nay, Zuleika, this is foolish. I thought you had more fortitude. I do not go immediately. I shall yet remain here a fortnight, and I shall leave Harry still with you to bear you company till my return. Come, dry your eyes, and let me see you smile—that's right—that's a brave girl. Think, dear; when we meet again it will be to part no more while life remains."

Zuleika sat for some minutes silent, endeavoring to subdue her emotion, her head resting upon her husband's shoulder.

He did not speak to her, but sat awaiting some remark from her lips. At length she said:

"You said, George, that you would leave Harry with me; are you sure that he will stay; have you spoken to him on the subject?"

"No, dear, but I have little doubt that he will remain, if I wish him to do so. He is a strange boy—little fitted to bear

the hardships of a sailor's life. I never heard his history—it must be a singular one. Did he ever speak to you of his friends or of his past life, Zuleika?"

"He has, George, and it *is* a strange history; but I promised that until he chose to speak of it to others himself, I would never betray his secret."

"Be it so, dear. Keep your own counsel if you choose," said Seymour, laughing. "I suppose it is some romantic episode. The boy has been crossed in love, or something of that sort—eh? Well, he is young, and will get over it. Meanwhile, I don't think he will be happier anywhere than with you, and when I return I will consider what I shall do with him."

"But you have not asked him, dear. How do you know that he will consent to remain? You would not wish him to stay if he should express a desire to return home to his friends?"

"Certainly not; though I should have to send him home as a passenger in some ship from Spain, or the south of France. But I will speak to him to-day. Now, dear, let us finish planting the flower bed we commenced yesterday. I must put the garden in complete order before I leave."

On the evening of that day, Seymour took an opportunity of questioning Jane Miller as to her wishes with regard to returning to America.

"Harry," said he, "in a few days I am going to leave the island, and shall proceed to the south of France, and thence take passage to America. What say you, boy—Zuleika is fond of your society; she has no one with her but strangers, excepting yourself and Julia, her old negress attendant from Annabon. Do you wish to return home, or will you remain with Zuleika until my return?"

Jane had thought much on this subject. Her heart yearned to see her poor, forsaken parent again; and she grieved at the consequences of her past conduct, all the more bitterly, since the interview she, unknown to him, had had with her brother on the occasion of the first visit of the G—— to Annabon. Still she dreaded to return as much or more than she grieved to remain longer absent. She felt that she had placed a gulf between herself and her friends which, were she to seek to cross, might overwhelm her. She had committed a breach of the laws of society, which surrounded her with as many difficulties to combat against as though she had actually been guilty of an unpardonable crime. Deeply she deplored her

past folly; but she knew that having strayed from the beaten path of social conventionalities, her return was impossible. At all events a longer stay with Zuleika, for whom she felt a warm and sisterly friendship, provided Zuleika herself were desirous she should stay, would give her time to arrange a plan of future operations; besides, she pitied, sincerely pitied Zuleika; and then her woman's curiosity stepped in, and claimed a portion of her thoughts. She was anxious to know what would eventually become of the loving, unsuspecting Greek girl. She therefore replied :

"I am willing to stay, Captain Seymour, if Zuleika is desirous that I should remain."

"Then I can tell her that you will remain with her on the island."

"Yes, sir."

"You are a good lad, Harry, and the day may come when I shall have it in my power to push your fortunes. I will not forget the services you have rendered me—depend upon that. Now, go and tell Zuleika the determination at which you have arrived."

The day of Seymour's departure was rapidly drawing near. The felucca had been got in readiness for a sea voyage, and it was Seymour's intention to proceed to Valetta, in the Island of Malta, and then to discharge his Greek crew, and after disposing of the felucca, to take passage to the South of France (Toulon or Marseilles) and thence to proceed to New York and ascertain from Mr. Mordant how matters had prospered with regard to the Albatross during his temporary secession from the command of that vessel.

He and his bride and Jane Miller often cruised around in the felucca amongst the islands in the vicinity of Zuleika's Isle, and occasionally he took a trip alone to some one of the larger islands for the purpose of procuring such articles as he required for the promotion of Zuleika's comfort and convenience during his absence, and which could not be readily obtained on the islet which he had chosen for her abode. A week had passed away since the conversation above recorded had taken place. During that time the old woman alluded to in a preceding chapter had not been seen, and she had been forgotten by both Seymour and his bride. One day, however, Zuleika rushed into the cottage from the garden, alarm depicted in her countenance. On being asked by Seymour what had occasioned her fright, she said that she had again seen the

dreaded and mysterious woman cautiously watching her from a covert of trees in the rear of the garden.

"By heaven!" exclaimed Seymour, "this is unendurable; I will see to it immediately, love, and cause a stop to be put to this annoyance; although, after all, I imagine, as I have said before, she is some poor foolish creature who is an object of pity rather than fear."

He walked down that day to the little hamlet inhabited by the fishermen who made the island their abode—the only hamlet the island contained—and made inquiry regarding the woman.

"She comes from Lemnos, Excellenza," said one of the fishermen, "in one of the boats that occasionally visit this island, to dispose of mats and such like trifles. She came here yesterday, and departed in the same boat scarcely two hours since. Poor thing! she is mad, Excellenza, the evil eye is upon her."

"Do you know any harm of her—is she hated or feared by the people here?"

Hated! no, Excellenza; but she is pitied by some, and feared by others; but there is no harm in her, I believe. There are strange tales abroad with regard to her. It is said she once knew better days. Excellenza, she has the gift of prophecy."

Seymour said no more, but he determined to go to Lemnos and find out the woman, if possible, and prevent any future annoyance to Zuleika. He walked along the shore until he reached the spot where the felucca lay at anchor, and stepping into the cobble boat, he paddled on board, and ordered the lateen sail to be hoisted and the anchor weighed, and in a few minutes the little vessel was under headway for the island of Lemnos, which was just visible in the distance. He had learnt from the fishermen that the old woman was called Marca, and that she had suffered from reverses of fortune to such a degree that her reason had become impaired. Tradition said her ancestors lorded it with sovereign rule over the larger and more fertile islands of the Cyclades, and that she herself had been the bride of a great freebooter chieftain. In the course of an hour the felucca's anchor was dropped off the small harbor of Lemnos, and Seymour went ashore, resolved, if possible, to discover the abode and seek an interview with Marca.

He learnt, by making inquiry of the inhabitants of the island, that the object of his search resided in solitary seclusion in a wretched hut deeply embosomed in a dark wood a short distance from the sea-side.

"But, Excellenza," asked his informant, "what would you seek from the dark woman of Lemnos? Marca hath an evil eye, and a tongue prone to prophesy terrible things. Beware, Excellenza, beware."

"*Egou sas euxagistou* (I thank you) for the warning," replied Seymour, who had addressed the man in the Romaic dialect—the vernacular of the islands; "but, my friend, I fear her not; nevertheless, I thank you."

The fisherman inclined his head and placed his hand upon his breast. "Excellenza," said he, "*Me kanetee megalen timen*" (you do me too much honor).

Following the path which he had been told would carry him to the hut of Marca, Seymour found himself in the course of a few minutes deep in the bosom of the wood, and, about half a mile from the entrance, he discovered by the smoke that issued from a spot where the trees grew thicker than common, that he was in the vicinity of the abode he sought. He approached the spot cautiously—he did not wish to alarm the old woman, and besides, he felt a strange sensation creeping over him that could not actually be described as fear, and which was yet near akin to it. Brave as a lion where danger was openly present, Seymour was still, like most imaginative persons, a little given to superstition, and the strange character he had heard of the old woman, and her singular desire to haunt the abode of his bride when he was absent, troubled him; and now the dark, solitary, savage aspect of Marca's hut, so embedded amidst the thickest foliage of the wood that the cheering light of the sun's rays was almost shut out, and the glare of a charcoal fire that was burning in front of the hut, and tinting the confined landscape with its lurid hues, presented a scene eminently calculated to awaken any latent feelings of superstition he possessed. In front of the fire Marca herself was seated, with her back turned towards the intruder upon her savage solitude. She was attired in a loose wrapper of scarlet color, and of coarse material, and on her head she wore a conical woollen cap, from which her elfin locks escaped in long tangled ringlets, and although her appearance generally betokened extreme age, these tangled elfin locks were still untouched by the hand of time, and streamed down over her scarlet wrapper in vivid contrast with its bright color. She was busily occupied in weaving rushes together, and at the same time superintending some culinary operation that was going forward, in an earthen pipkin, raised upon a tripod over the fire, and from the closed lid

of which the steam was rapidly escaping; at the back of the fire a huge piece of half charred wood was sending forth columns of suffocating smoke, and this smoke it was which had first warned Seymour of his proximity to the hut of the Sibyl. Marca neither saw nor heard the approach of her visitor, or at least she showed no sign of having done so, for Seymour approached close to her, and watched the rapid movements of her skinny fingers, as she pursued her avocation, chanting, as she did so, some rude Romaic rhyme, but she neither turned nor spoke to him.

Seymour cleared his throat, and coughed, and stamped his foot upon the earth, in hopes of attracting her attention. Still she neither spoke, nor heeded him. At length he addressed her with the usual Romaic salutation:

"*Na ze—na ze* (long life), good Marca."

"*Ti opisete kur?*" (What is your pleasure, signor?) she replied, still without turning her head.

"I have sought the aged Marca," answered Seymour, "to ask if she needs the assistance of a wealthy stranger; I come from yonder small island," pointing his finger in the direction of Zuleika's Isle, although the old woman was not looking at him. "I have seen Marca there, seeking to sell her wares. Such toil is unfitted for one of her years; I would render her position easy—say, Marca, how can I assist you?"

"Signor, you speak with a false tongue," replied the aged female, "that is not the object of your journey hither; I knew you would come; I have waited many years for the appearance of you and your young bride. Last night, when the stars betokened that it was the hour of midnight, I had a vision, and I knew then you would come here to seek me to-day in my hut. It was for that reason I hastened home so soon from the island on which you have fixed your bride's abode. But, signor, strive not to deceive one who has dealings with those wiser and more powerful than you, and who can penetrate into the secret mysteries of the human soul. You came not to do me service, but because you feared harm from me towards your dainty bride. Is it not so?" she added, with startling energy, springing at the same moment to her feet, her tall wiry frame stretched to its full height, and for the first time confronting her visitor. "Is it not so, I ask?"

"And if it is?" replied Seymour, who was startled by the woman's strange energy.

But she did not immediately reply. She scrutinized her vis-

itor's appearance from head to foot, muttering to herself in a soliloquising manner, as though she were alone, and unheard by any human being.

"Fair to look upon; goodly in stature, tall and straight as the cedar; but though fair without, blighted at the core by the canker worm of remorse. Your hand, signor. I would read your destiny more narrowly than the stars allow me," she added aloud in the startling energetic tone she had before spoken, as she took the visitor's hand in her skinny fingers and intently scanned the lines upon the palm. Then letting it drop, she muttered to herself in a dialect unknown to Seymour, and stood gazing vacantly before her, apparently heedless of his presence.

Seymour felt his flesh creep as he gazed upon her; and fearful that he would lose command of himself if he gave way to the feelings of superstition that were growing upon him, he resolved again to address her. He repeated his question:

"What if I have come hither for the purpose of which you spake?" said he.

"Nothing but this," answered the old woman, whom the sound of her visitor's voice seemed to have aroused from her reverie—"nothing but this, that your visit has been made in vain. I seek not to injure the harmless dove whom the falcon has enticed to his nest. Fear no harm to your bride through me; but know this, that were I inclined to do her evil not all your power could prevent me. Man, you are doomed. You stand on the verge of a precipice, and one false step will imperil your life. You should live long on earth, signor, for—" and she approached her lips close to Seymour's ear, and hastily whispered, "you know that hell is an eternity of anguish and horror. Go," she continued aloud, "go home to your bride. You are about to leave her; fear not that harm will happen to her while you are absent. There are those watching over her more powerful than you to protect her from evil; once again you will revisit her, and then—but the fates forbid me to say what then—my tongue is tied. Go, signor, go; your bride awaits you at your cottage. Leave Marca to her solitude, and fear not for Bedita."

Bedita! the name sounded familiarly to the ears of Seymour. Suddenly the thought flashed through his mind, "*Bedita* was the name that the woman of whom I purchased Zuleika gave to her—and *she* was called *Zoe*—can this be she? No, impossible. *Zoe* was at that time a young woman herself, and that was but ten or twelve years ago, while this woman, *Marca*, must have

numbered seventy years at least; besides Zoe was handsome—a model of savage beauty—yet I will know more.”

The superstitious fears that had, during the interview with Marca, held him in thralldom, vanished, now that the reaction had taken place. He resolved, at all hazards, to satisfy himself with regard to this fresh doubt that had arisen in his mind, and he entered the hut into which Marca had entered, after she bade him return to his bride. But it was untenanted. It consisted of one simple room, almost destitute of furniture, save a rude couch and a piece of hewn timber which served for a chair. He rushed again into the open air; he sought the covert of the woods, but in vain; Marca was not to be found; and after spending half an hour in vain search, he returned to the boat, and going on board the felucca, returned to Zuleika's Isle. He met Zuleika and Jane Miller on the beach; they had seen the approach of the felucca, and had come to meet him.

“Whither have you been this morning, wanderer?” playfully asked Zuleika.

“To Lemnos, darling,” replied Seymour. “I have been to see that old woman who has two or three times terrified you so much. It is as I said; she is a poor, simple, imbecile creature; you must not be so silly as to be alarmed when she comes here.”

“I dare say it is mere folly on my part,” returned Zuleika; “I shall not be frightened of her in future.”

Seymour's mind misgave him while he spoke. Yet he had the ancient sibyl's pledge that she intended no harm to his bride, and he was sufficiently superstitious to believe that a pledge thus given by a woman such as she, would be scrupulously observed.

“But I have strange news to tell,” said Zuleika. “While you have been absent, a party of fishermen and women landed from a boat from one of the islands near here, and amongst them there was a tall, handsome woman, who regarded me very earnestly. Her black eyes looked as though they would pierce me through, so intense was their gaze. I thought I had seen her face before; even her tall, upright form seemed familiar to me. Yet, where I had seen her, I could not tell. Strange recollections—events that I have long forgotten, or only remembered as though they had passed before me in a dream, appeared to revive—and then the thought passed through my mind that this strange woman was Zoe—the woman who, when a child, I believed to have been my mother. I had no reason

to love her; but I felt as though I must rush into her arms, and beg her to disclose the mystery that surrounds my birth; but she had mingled with the crowd, and I did not see her again."

"Mere fancy, darling," said Seymour; but he did not feel satisfied with what he had heard. It seemed as if some mysterious fate were gathering its folds around him, and he felt a strange fear that he should find himself irretrievably entangled in its meshes. He strove, however, to shake off the alarm he really felt, and resolved to hasten his departure from the island, determined that this should be the last time that he would leave Zuleika behind him. Nay, he resolved in his own mind to make this his last voyage, and on his return to renounce his wandering life, and, with the wealth he had amassed, to live happily and peacefully on shore.

His arrangements were completed in the course of a few days more; and now the day arrived for his departure. He and Zuleika were taking their last morning walk along the sea shore.

"How long will you be absent, George?" asked Zuleika.

"Perhaps four or five months, dear," replied Seymour.

"It grieves me that you should be obliged to leave me now, for you know, George, what will, in all probability, occur before you come back," and the fair girl blushed as she spoke.

"I guess what you allude to, darling," answered Seymour. "I shall have a pledge of our mutual love, a bouncing boy or perhaps a miniature copy of your own dear self, to welcome on my return," and he stooped his head and kissed the blushing girl. "Well," he added, "if it be a boy I suppose I must leave his name to your choice; but, if it be a girl, darling, you must call her Zuleika. Keep up your spirits, dear. Julia will be a faithful attendant, and when I return, recollect, we shall not part again while we live. We shall be very happy, Zuleika."

"I hope so George. I shall always be happy in the knowledge of your love."

This last remark was uttered by Zuleika in a tone of hopeful anticipation, and yet there was a tremor in her voice, and an expression of anxiety in her countenance strangely at variance with her usual light and joyous mood. It was noticed by Seymour.

"You are melancholy, darling," he said, "you must not take my present parting so much to heart, you must shake off

these low spirits, and strive to be cheerful. Think how soon five months will pass away, and think of our happy re-union then."

"I will try to do so, George; still I wish that you were not going to leave me now."

They returned to the cottage, and the remainder of the day was spent in making such arrangements as Seymour thought would be necessary during his absence, for the comfort of his wife.

On the following morning he took a tender farewell of Zuleika; told Harry to be a cheerful companion to her, and promised her attendant—the old negro woman from Annabon, who was devotedly attached to her mistress—that he would abundantly reward her on his return, if she served Zuleika well and faithfully; and then, stepping into the boat that was to convey him to the felucca, he soon reached the little craft; her lateen sails were loosed to the breeze, the anchor weighed, and Seymour standing on the raised quarter deck, waved his cap as a parting salute. Zuleika was weeping on the shore, and Jane Miller was standing by her side endeavoring to cheer and comfort her with words of happy anticipation.

A crowd of fishermen and women had assembled to see the felucca get under weigh. Was it fancy, or was it indeed the tall, slender form of the ancient sibyl, Marca, who stood conspicuous amongst that crowd of women and raised her hand and pointed her long skinny fingers toward the felucca, whether in menace or in warning; Seymour was unable to tell; but again his superstitious fears came over him and he turned away his head, and, in a hurried voice, gave some orders to the Greek seamen.

In another hour Zuleika's Isle had nearly disappeared from the sight of those on the felucca's deck, and the little craft was speeding swiftly before a fair breeze on her voyage to Valetta.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Return of Charlotte Herbert, and her Introduction into Mr. Wilson's Family—What arises therefrom.

CHARLOTTE HERBERT arrived safely in New Orleans, after a prosperous voyage across the Atlantic from Sierra Leone.

She scarcely knew what her intentions were when she landed on the levee. She had no money in her possession beyond a small sum which Captain P——, aware that having been saved from shipwreck, she must necessarily be in a destitute condition, had delicately placed at her disposal, when he bade her farewell at Sierra Leone. She had accepted this thankfully as a loan, to be repaid at her earliest convenience ; but she had never told the captain anything relating to her history, and he was not aware that the small sum he had lent her was all that she possessed to save her from utter destitution. He naturally imagined that she had friends in New Orleans, or, at all events, in the State of Louisiana, and the money he had lent her, he thought, would be sufficient to carry her to them, or to support her in New Orleans until she could hear from them; but, unfortunately, it was her all, and she arrived in her native country, after her long absence, in the condition of an emigrant who has no friends, and who has to work his own way into some means of support. Charlotte had friends in the United States, it is true, but she was distant from them, and she did not wish to make herself known to them. She almost hoped that they thought her dead, and had long since forgotten her. She was, however, a well educated young woman, of interesting personal appearance, and she, fortunately, soon after her arrival, read in the *Picayune*, an advertisement asking for the services of a young lady to occupy the post of governess in the family of a gentleman who held the position of guardian to two of his brother's children—two girls, aged respectively twelve and sixteen years. Happily for her, her manners and appearance enabled her to obtain the situation, without any other than verbal inquiry being made as to her ability and the respectability of her family, and she entered upon her duties still preserving her incognita. The Misses Wilson, the two young ladies who were placed under her charge, were amiable and beautiful girls ; but, although they were sisters, they did not bear the slightest resemblance to each other. Marie, the elder, was a tall, pale, dark-haired, black-eyed girl, possessed of features of classical regularity, and with a sweet and gentle expression of countenance, although, when at rest, a tinge of melancholy seemed habitually to overshadow it. She moved with the grace of a queen ; and although she was naturally reserved and shrank from observation, her beauty drew around her a host of admirers, to none of whom she appeared to show any marked preference. The beauty of Louise, the younger sister,

was a perfect antithesis to that of Marie. She was small of her age, joyous in temperament, impulsive, and quick to take affront, but as quickly appeased, and slight and agile as a fairy. Her complexion was delicately fair, her hair light auburn, her eyes blue, and the ruddy flush of health and spirits was called to her cheeks by every passing emotion. Mr. Wilson, the uncle of the girls, was a planter of considerable wealth. He was, however, a man of cold, calculating disposition ; and although he fulfilled to the letter that which he considered to be his duty towards his fair wards, he seldom mingled in their amusements, or seemed to take any interest in their studies, beyond asking their young governess, at stated seasons, how they got along.

Miss Herbert was not long in perceiving that some deep-seated sorrow was preying on the mind of the elder of her pupils. Two or three times, entering suddenly and unexpectedly into her apartment, she had found her in tears, which she in vain sought to hide, or even to restrain ; but, although the young girl was evidently fond of her, she never would explain the cause of these tears, and firmly resisted every effort made by Miss Herbert to induce her to confide to her the cause of her distress.

A month or two passed away, however, and although Miss Herbert herself was often the subject of melancholy reflections, the cause of which the reader may have surmised, she was as happy and comfortable in her situation as she could well expect to be.

On her arrival at New Orleans she had placed in the post-office the letters and parcels entrusted to her charge by young Miller ; and Mrs. Miller had in due time received the letters. About the same time, however, she received a letter from her boy, direct from Sierra Leone, in which he alluded to the singular story of the White lady of Annabon, and related to his mother the history of the letter and the ring, asserting boldly that he was confident that the ring she had worn on her finger on the day he left home, and which she prized so highly in consequence of its being, as she supposed, a memento of her lost daughter, had been in his possession for several weeks, and had disappeared even more strangely than it had come into his possession. He concluded by asking his mother, seriously, whether, during the period he had been absent, she had at any time missed the ring.

The worthy widow knew not what to make of this epistle.

The ring he spoke of she had constantly worn; never for a single moment had it been absent from her finger, even while she was sleeping; besides, the idea was preposterous. The poor woman became alarmed. She had heard of the deleterious effects of the African climate, and she naturally enough came to the conclusion that the boy must be suffering under some derangement of the brain, and that the whole story he told was a mental delusion.

She showed the letter to Mr. Mordant, who told her that he had heard of the island recluse from his nephew, and that as he was about writing to Sierra Leone himself, if she would leave the letter for him to read, he would make such inquiries of his agent as should induce him to see the boy, if the ship still remained in the harbor, or should again visit that part of the coast. He agreed with her that the boy must be laboring under some extraordinary delusion. "But," he added, "my dear Mrs. Miller, some strange mania appears to have seized all my correspondents there just now. I have just heard from one of my sea-captains, who has taken some mad freak into his head, and gone I know not whither, leaving the vessel to shift for itself. (The widow had called at Mr. Mordant's office in town on the day he had received Captain Seymour's letter, announcing his intention to quit the Albatross for a time, and on the very day the evening of which had been productive—as the reader is aware—of such a complication of annoyances.) The letter was left at the office, and having been mislaid by Mr. Mordant, was found and perused by his son, and subsequently became the occasion of some singular misadventures. This, however, was not the only difficulty that arose out of the abstraction of the ring from young Miller's chest, by Miss Herbert, under the impression that it was her own. She had frequently worn it during the voyage home, though she had reasons for not doing so on board the man-of-war, and had never thought of looking into the little drawer in her trunk where her own ring had been placed, until some time after her arrival at New Orleans, when she came upon it accidentally, and was perfectly bewildered with amazement on finding herself in possession of two rings exactly *fac similes* of each other. She puzzled her brains for some time, endeavoring to account for the strange discovery, but failing to do so, she carelessly laid one of the rings aside, trusting that time would explain the apparent mystery.

We will now return to Mr. Wilson and his two nieces.

About two months after the first connection of Miss Herbert with the family, she was sent for into Mr. Wilson's study.

"I have sent for you, Miss Herbert," said he, after he had invited her to be seated, "to inform you that my elder niece, Miss Marie, will soon be released from your charge. She is shortly to be married to a young gentleman of good family and excellent expectations, in New York. I am well satisfied with your conduct since you have been in the family, and you will continue to superintend the education of my youngest niece at the same salary that I have hitherto paid you. I wish you, however, to see Miss Marie, and to reason with her upon her folly in objecting to the marriage. I propose for her. She knows that my heart is set upon it, and it is her *duty* to obey me, and her *interest* as well." He pronounced the two words duty and interest, so emphatically, that Miss Herbert could not help noticing it; but knowing the planter's stern nature, she thought less of it than she might otherwise have done.

She replied :

"I will see her as you desire, sir; I have been pained to notice the mental anxiety under which your elder ward appears to labor. She has never confided the cause of it to me; but I presume, that what you have just related to me will explain it."

"Perhaps it will, Miss Herbert. At all events, see Marie, and endeavor to reason her into a proper frame of mind, and warn her, from me, to beware how she risks the utter ruin of all her future prospects in life."

Miss Herbert quitted the presence of her imperious employer, and immediately sought the chamber of her pupil. She had not expressed her sentiments in the presence of Mr. Wilson, but she sincerely pitied the girl, and she resolved, if matters were as she suspected, that her influence should not be exerted to secure her pupil's life-long wretchedness—for life-long wretchedness she felt would result from a forced union on the part of Marie with a man whom she did not love, whom she perhaps hated and despised.

Marie Wilson was sitting in her room by the open window, disconsolately reading a note that her guardian had just sent her. She started and thrust it in her bosom when Miss Herbert entered.

"I am sent here, my dear Marie, by your uncle and guardian, Mr. Wilson. He has told me of his intentions regarding you, and has desired me to express to you my opinion that it is your duty not to oppose his wishes; far be it from me, how-

ever, to advise you to adopt a course which must result in your lasting unhappiness. I suspect that the intelligence I have just heard has been the cause of the despondency which I have so frequently observed you to be afflicted with, though you have never made me your confidant. Is it so? Is this marriage upon which your uncle seems so determined, so distasteful to you? If so, I counsel you to refuse to obey him in this respect, or at least to temporize with him. In a few years more you will be of age, and free from his guardianship—I believe you have property in your own right—and then you can please yourself as regards one of the most important actions of woman's life."

The tears were falling fast from the eyes of Marie ere Miss Herbert had done speaking. As soon as she could control her emotion, she said :

"It is as you suspected, Miss Herbert. Hitherto I have kept the secret of my grief locked up in my own bosom. It is now twelve months since I first met the man who desires to marry me, and who has gained over Mr. Wilson to advocate his cause—nay, more—to insist upon this sacrifice on my part. He was then on a visit to New Orleans, and although I do not know the particulars of the case, I believe that Mr. Wilson is involved in debt to his father who is a merchant of great wealth in New York. He sought my hand then, and was by me refused, for his character was bad; I heard sad stories respecting him, besides, I cannot give my hand without my heart goes with it. But he was not to be thus repulsed. He sought Mr. Wilson and asked him to give him my hand in marriage. I believe some infamous covenant was entered into between them; but though I suspect, I do not entirely know its nature. It is enough that I must obey—must marry a man I cannot love—must break my plighted word to another—or—I shudder to contemplate my probable fate." Again the unhappy girl burst into a paroxysm of grief.

"My dear Marie," said Miss Herbert, endeavoring to console the weeping girl, "your guardian cannot compel you to this marriage. You overrate the power his trust reposes in him. You can do as I advise you; plead your youth, refuse to marry at present, and when you become of age please yourself as to your choice of a husband."

"Alas! Miss Herbert, you know not all my sad history. You know not the humiliation to which I am exposed. You think me the niece of Mr. Wilson and the sister of Louise; so

in one sense I am; but the mother of Louise was not my mother. I am the daughter—why should I blush to own it—I am the daughter of a favorite quadroon slave who belonged to Mr. Wilson's wife, and who died shortly after her mistress. It is only since I have been urged to marry Charles Mordant that I have been told this—I am the property, body and soul, of my guardian, as the world believes him to be, so at least he says; and he threatens—yes, even in this letter he has sent me to-day, which I was reading when you entered—he threatens, unless I consent immediately to follow his wishes, to declare my parentage to the world, and to dispose of me as *his* slave—so he has the cruelty to tell me—to the highest bidder. Oh! God, to what a state of wretchedness am I reduced.”

At the name of Charles Mordant, Miss Herbert had started and turned pale. For some time she could not trust herself to speak; but with a violent effort she subdued her emotion, and said in a husky voice which, had Marie not been suffering “woes all her own,” she must have noticed.

“But when Mr. Wilson's brother, your father, died, did he not leave you any property? Are you sure he did not during his life-time purchase your freedom?”

“I know not. He died suddenly. He was as fond of me as he was of my sister Louise, the daughter of his wife whom he married, I am told, about a year after I was born. Louise's mother, whom I always supposed to be my mother likewise, treated me as though I were her own daughter; and we were led to suppose by our father, I and Louise, that his large property was to be divided between us in equal portions. Now, my uncle tells me my father left no will, and Louise is his only heiress, and that I am subject entirely to his will and pleasure. He says if I consent to marry Charles Mordant, I shall have my share; otherwise —, I cannot say what he threatened me with otherwise. It is too dreadful a fate.”

“Poor child,” said Miss Herbert, “I could not have thought such iniquity existed on this earth; but, Marie, I can save you from this dreaded fate—at least from marriage with Charles Mordant. *He is my husband!* He gained my affections when an artless, unsuspecting girl. Not long ago,” she added, smiling mournfully—“but it appears to me that I have grown prematurely aged—he gained his ends by going through the ceremony of what he thought was a false marriage. I sometime afterwards, when he taunted me with it, thought so too, and was almost driven to insanity. I fled to New Orleans,

and after subsisting on the sale of my jewels for some time, I engaged as stewardess, heedless almost what became of me, on board a vessel bound to Liverpool; the vessel was wrecked, but my life was saved. However, that is nothing to the purpose now. After my return to New Orleans, and not more than a month ago, I met the man who had played me false, pretending to have been a Baptist clergyman. I recognized, and would have avoided him. He was accompanied by another person, whom I also recognized as having been present at the ceremony. They stopped me. It was in a lonely place; and I could not escape them; but they told me they wished me no harm; on the contrary, what they had to say would be to my benefit. I was compelled to listen. Then they told me that Mr. Mordant had persuaded a young man, not the one who married us, but he who was present with him, to personate a clergyman on the occasion of what I thought was to be our wedding, and thus cruelly to deceive me; but, though a pretended friend, this man was a secret enemy of Charles, who had treated him with contempt and scorn in the presence of some of his aristocratic companions. He therefore sought revenge by procuring the assistance of another person—a magistrate, though I fear me he was an unworthy one, to sign the contract; and on the evening when the disgraceful and cruel trick was to be played, Charles's friend pretended sickness, and the entire ceremony was performed by the other; since then the breach between these two men and Charles Mordant has widened. They would now willingly do anything to injure his future prospects, and they wished me to unite with them in exposing him. I refused. I scarcely knew what to do or how to act. But I am now decided. Dear Marie, my name is not Charlotte Herbert, but Jeanette Dixon, and Mr. Wilson cannot force this hateful marriage upon you—for, as I said before, Charles Mordant is my husband; and, thank God! when I was cast adrift upon the ocean, the written contract which proves my marriage, was saved; I kept it in a purse which I wore suspended from my neck. It was damaged by the water, but it is still legible."

She drew a purse from her pocket, and took thence a torn and stained paper—almost rotten, and ready to fall into fragments; but the marriage contract of Charles Mordant and Jeanette Dixon, legally attested and signed by a magistrate, in the presence of witnesses, was distinctly legible.

"Thank God ! I am saved," exclaimed Marie, throwing her arms around Jeanette Dixon's neck.

CHAPTER XXVI.

An Essay on Familiarity with Death—Captain James is Rewarded for his Kindness to the *Yunga Jagos* Negress.

Who, that has visited Sierra Leone (the Land of Lions), the capital of Her Britannic Majesty's possessions in Western Africa, would think, as, newly arrived from the calm monotonous seas of the tropics, he gazes with admiration and delight upon the brilliant scenery of the coast upon which this capital is situated, that the soil, laden with vegetable wealth of the richest and most gorgeous description, was pregnant with the seeds of a malaria that is almost always fatal to the health of the European residents ? Who would think that the atmosphere, redolent with aromatic perfume, was filled with minute globules of poisonous vapor, which, to inhale, is to sow the seeds of disease and death ? Who that lands on that shore, and promenades the clean, well laid out, and elevated streets, lined with villas surrounded with balconies, rendered gay and pleasing to the eye in consequence of their light and tasteful structure ; the cleanliness of their white walls and the neatness of the broad green jalousies, which serve instead of glass windows in this sultry clime, prettily as they stand amongst the gaily arranged gardens and shrubberies. Who would think that these light and fairy-like structures were so often the domicils of disease and death ? and that at certain seasons of the year, beautiful as they appear without, they are changed to lazar houses within, while the families who inhabit them, rapidly, one after another, pass from these beautiful and luxurious abodes to the dark earthen walls of the narrow tomb !

High above the town, situated on the summit of a steep hill—located there for the purpose of ensuring to the residents a bountiful supply of the purest air that can be obtained, although it is a question whether the boon is not too dearly earned by the toil (in this hot climate) that it requires to reach the heights—stand the barracks and the hospital—the former often scantily tenanted ; the wards of the latter, not-

withstanding its inmates rapidly pass from it, generally well filled; the ranks of invalids, however fast they may be thinned by death, being quickly recruited by fresh candidates for admission.

Yet, it is a strange fact, that the more man witnesses of disease and death—the more he is exposed to either—the less he thinks of them—the more careless and reckless he becomes—the less he grieves for the loss of those he claims as his friends. He becomes a believer in the doctrine of manifest destiny; and if he or his friends are to die, so it must be, he says; it is useless to try to avert the doom; it is cowardly to fear it, and childish to give way to useless grief.

This feeling is apparent as well on the battle-field, and on the deck of the ship in an engagement, as when exposed to the malarious influences of an unhealthy climate. It is no uncommon thing to see an officer rise suddenly from the mess-table—where, perhaps, ten minutes before he had been entertaining his comrades with some pleasant jest, though, perchance, an oft-repeated tale, or has joined loudest in the mirth occasioned by the jest of one of his neighbors—and, with pallid features, quit the room, and seek his own apartment—and the cause is well known; a negro attendant may follow his master from the mess-room, but not one of his *friends* think it necessary to inquire what is the matter. Perhaps the exit of the stricken one is unheeded—perchance it calls forth the quiet though pointed remark, “So —— is in for Yellow Jack.” The chances are two to one that the victim of the yellow fever never rejoins that mess-table; still the jest passes round with the bottle, and sentiments are given and toasts proposed, and even disease and death are made a joke of; and, with reckless bravado, some incipient hero drinks to “Rapid promotion and a sickly season.” Promotion through the death of his comrade! Still, there is no evil aforethought in this—no malice. 'Tis but the callousness that, as we have asserted, is ever produced in the human heart by familiarity with strife and bloodshed, or with disease and death.

A week or two after the conversation recorded in a preceding chapter, that had taken place between the directing physician of the hospital and the captains of the Buzzard and the G——, these three gentlemen were seated at dinner at the officers' mess-room table in the Sierra Leone barracks. Both the sailors were to take their departure on the following day,

and they had been invited to a farewell dinner with the officers of the garrison.

"By-the-by, Peterson," said Captain James, of the Buzzard, "you were relating to me and my friend, Captain P——, a rather romantic story, in connection with the two negro babies we went to see in the nurse's ward at the hospital. Was it merely a creation of your own imagination, or was the scene you anticipated realized?"

"Realized to the letter, my dear fellow," replied the doctor. "As I told you, I sent for the woman, and she proved to be the mother of the two children. It does a man good, occasionally, to witness a scene such as that which occurred at the hospital on the day the woman was brought in. She did not know why she was brought back, and was a little frightened, poor thing; but I had her led into the ward where the children were sleeping. I never saw such little devils as they are for sleeping in my life—no wonder they get so fat. However, when she came in, led by one of the matrons, looking about her with a wild stare, as if she was watching an opportunity to cut and run from the custody of the nurse, I pinched one of the young ones in the ear, and of course the little d—I set up a squall. That was what I wanted. I told you, you recollect, that it was said the mother of the children had recognized the wail of her infants while they were being conveyed on board the slaver, whence you took them—and I had a mind to see whether the cry of these infants would have the same effect with this *Yunga Jugos* woman. By George! sir, you should have seen her when she heard the squall. She stood still as a statue—her head inclining a little to one side, and the forefinger of her right hand raised in an attitude of earnest attention. I pinched the ear of the other infant, and they set up a most unmelodious duet. But the negro wench heard whence the sound proceeded. In a moment she was by the side of the crib, and in another moment the two children were in her arms, squealing like young porkers, though their cries were stifled by the smothering caresses of the mother, who was perfectly frantic with joy. She skipped and danced about the room, still holding the children in her arms, tightly clasped to her bosom, until I thought she would go crazy. Suddenly she sprang to the crib, laid the children down, and then rushing to me, flung herself at my feet, and clinging to my legs, showed the most unequivocal and affecting signs of gratitude. Then she sprang up,

and I verily believe was about to caress me after the same fashion as she had caressed the children. But I bolted. I by no means wished to experience a public embrace from a negress, though she is deuced good looking; besides, I was a little affected myself. I will own up to it. But, Captain James; I had almost forgotten to say that I disclaimed the pleasure of having been the occasion of the restoration of her children, and with some difficulty made her understand that a stranger (meaning you) was the person to whom her gratitude was due, and promised to introduce her to you. It is well thought of, Sambo," turning to a negro attendant, "tell Juba that I want her. I have called her Juba, Captain," again addressing the sea officer, "and intended to keep her in my family for the present. But what ails you?"

Captain James had turned pale and risen from his chair. "I feel strangely unwell," he said; "a sensation of sickness has come over me, all in a moment, such as I never experienced before." He did not trust himself to say more, but hastily quitted the room—the party assembled looked gravely and knowingly around the table at each other.

"A decided case of Yellow Jack," said a young ensign, at the lower end of the table. "Captain James is booked, and there's a chance for young Stringer, his first lieutenant, to get an acting appointment to carry the ship home. Stringer's in luck. He was only telling me yesterday that he hoped to obtain a commander's commission when he got home. I fancy he'll earn the silver anchor to his epaulettes sooner than he anticipated."

This thoughtless, unfeeling speech was little heeded by the rest of the party. Doctor Peterson and Captain P—— followed the captain of the Buzzard out of the mess-room, and in a few minutes the joke and the jest, and the wine bottle, passed around amongst the other guests as if nothing of so serious a character had occurred to mar their festivity.

Ere two hours had elapsed, Captain James lay in a cot in one of the wards of the hospital, delirious with fever. His disease was the most virulent description of the fatal yellow fever—and Doctor Peterson had given up all hope of his ultimate recovery; for in this climate the disease speeds its course with a rapidity elsewhere unknown, and a few hours' space often sees the victim—in the apparent possession of perfect health—a fevered maniac and a cold and repulsive corpse. A few hours more, and he is consigned to the grave.

But Juba—as Dr. Peterson had termed her—had hastily and gladly responded to the summons that called her to see the rescuer of her offspring. She came, to find him gone, from the festive board to the sick couch—a victim to the dreadful and fatal disease of the climate. She asked to see him, but was denied. Doctor Peterson would admit no one but the nurses to the sick chamber. The *Yunga Jagos* woman was not to be discouraged, not to be repulsed. She asked to see the doctor, and, as well as she was able, in her imperfect English, she conjured him to admit her to the bedside of the fever-stricken victim. She could save him, she said; and so urgent was her appeal, so apparently confident her assertion, that the physician at length yielded to her importunities. He promised her that she should be admitted, though he had little or no faith in the expressed confidence of her curative powers.

To his astonishment, as soon as she had obtained the required permission, she darted out from the door, and sped rapidly away to a dense copse, which lay at about a quarter of a mile distant from the hospital, on the inland declivity of the hill on which the structure was located. She was soon back again, bearing a handful of herbs, of a nature unknown to the doctor, and the virtues of which had never been mentioned in the pharmacopœia. To his inquiry as to what she was going to do with these, she simply replied, “You shall see.” She burned them in a tin vessel over the fire—the herbs emitting a singular aromatic and almost stifling perfume, notwithstanding the lid of the vessel was kept tightly closed; and, having thus prepared herself, she entered the room in which lay the victim of the terrible disease. She requested to be alone with her patient for one hour. The doctor, as we have observed, had given up all hope of Captain James’s recovery, but he had known strange instances of the skill of the natives in curing diseases incidental to the climate, which had baffled all the skill of regularly trained physicians. The symptoms could be no worse—and the request of the *Yunga Jagos* woman was granted. For one hour she was closeted with her patient, and Doctor Peterson, whose curiosity had led him to linger at the door and to endeavor to listen to what was going on within, heard strange sounds issuing from the room, and peeping through the key-hole, he saw the negress engaged in incantations and mummeries similar to those employed by the native conjurers, when endeavoring to exorcise disease. He turned away with a sensation of sickness and loathing;—but, at the

expiration of the hour, the negress re-appeared. Doctor Peterson was about to enter the room. "Not yet ; not yet," signified the negress, placing her fingers to her lips, "He sleeps, and he must not be awakened. While he sleeps I must wait by his couch." She returned with her babes in her arms, and another hour elapsed. The doctor was growing impatient ; but just as he was on the point of entering the room—wondering at his own folly in having thus allowed himself to connive in such mummery—the negress again appeared, joy depicted upon her countenance, and beckoned him to follow her. He entered the room, and to his utter amazement beheld his patient, him whom he had lately given over as beyond the possibility of human aid—sitting up in the bed, supported by the pillows—for the weakening nature of the disorder, even in the short time that had elapsed since the attack had commenced, had prostrated his strength, and, probably, the active remedies, whatever they were, had still added to his debility : but, he was entirely free from fever, and was looking in mingled doubt and wonder at the woman who was standing by the side of the cot, jabbering away in her native dialect, still holding the infants in her arms, and evidently half wild with delight at the thought of having saved the life of the rescuer of her babes.

In the course of a day or two the captain had entirely recovered, and was enabled to rejoin his ship. Shortly afterwards he sailed for England—and thus, though it was a mere act of duty and common humanity on the part of the captain—partly the act of chance good fortune, in consequence of his having so opportunely fallen in with the slaver, was this act of humanity rewarded by the grateful mother's preservation of his life when the skill of the leech was utterly at fault.

The young ensign was mistaken, and Lieutenant Stringer had yet to wait ere he could mount the coveted silver anchors of the commander's rank on his plain gold epaulettes.

Doctor Peterson vainly sought to learn from Juba the means by which she had effected so magical a cure. The language of the negress was difficult to be understood, but she willingly showed him the herbs she had employed in her mysterious incantations ; they were simple creeping parasites, common enough in the woods, and although exceedingly aromatic, apparently possessed of no medical virtues. Nor did the grateful negress pretend they were ; she did not assert that they could be rendered available, save in peculiar cases. It was, she said, a mark of favor from the great *Obeah*, who had, in this

instance, rendered their virtues serviceable, in behalf of him who had restored her children to the arms and the heart of a wretched and despairing mother.* Juba did not wish to return to her tribe. She had, as we have before recorded, been sold by her husband, who had become satiated with her charms, and had taken to himself another wife in her place. She feared that if she returned, she would again be sold, perhaps into hopeless slavery. She accepted the offer of Captain James, to take her and her children to England with him, and was subsequently installed as a favored domestic in his family. Doctor Peterson was unwilling to part with her, but he considered that Captain James had a greater and a prior claim to her than he, and he agreed to the proposition of the former.

The Buzzard sailed for England, and on the same day Capt. P——, who had delayed the departure of the G—— purposely during the illness of his brother sailor, also sailed for the United States, greatly to the delight of young Miller, who was anxious again to see his mother, and perhaps a little impatient to show off amongst his former companions, whose destiny had not led them, so early in life, into such scenes of change and excitement as he had taken part in ; besides, the young midshipman was still in a state of considerable bewilderment, with regard to the mysterious connection between his mother's ring and the disappearance of the Recluse of Annabon.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Some further Mystery, leading to an Unexpected Dénoûment, arising out of the Rings.

“WHAT can the little gipsy mean ? It is a strange story she tells. Some mad woman, I suppose, who has got a fancy into her coddled brain ; which she cannot get rid of. I will read the paragraph again :

* A literal fact, excepting the alteration of names and dates. The writer, when on the African coast, was acquainted with an officer who was almost miraculously restored to health after having been given over by the physicians, by a negress whose children he had, under almost similar circumstances, restored to her. Whether the salutary efforts of the incantations of the negress were due to the *Obeah*, the aromatic perfume of the herbs she used in her medicines, the force of imagination, or to the sudden reaction which such a singular scene in his sick chamber had caused to take place in his system, he leaves to the judgment of his readers.

“ * * * A strange adventure has lately befallen me, dear William. You recollect sending me that beautiful ring, shortly after you removed to Boston. Why did you think it necessary to go there, William? Could you not have completed your legal studies quite as well in Augusta? But I suppose you know best. Perhaps it is better as it is; but I am forgetting my story. I have always worn that ring since—and mamma has often joked me about it; and a good many of my companions have asked me what I set so much store upon it for. Well, on Monday last as I was going across the meadow that lies at the back of our house—that meadow where we used to wander of an evening, after you came home from the office, during the happy period when I saw you every day—I met a lady, at least so far as appearances go; that is to say, she was respectably attired in black silk, and altogether presented a very decent appearance. I had pulled off my glove to gather a posy of wild flowers, and as this lady was passing me she stopped suddenly, and started, and looked so strange and frightened that I grew rather alarmed. I was about to ask her if she was unwell, when she approached me, and seizing my hand, asked me whence I obtained the ring I wore. I scarcely knew what to say; but I believe I told her it was a gift from a dear friend, and was about to pass on, when she grasped my right arm and commenced some incoherent harangue about her daughter; saying that the ring belonged to her, and that I must have stolen it from her, and she asked me if it had not the letter J engraved on the inside? I said yes, and that the initial stood for my own name—Jessica. However, she grew almost violent in her demeanor, and I don't know what I should have done had not papa come up on his way from the office. The lady commenced assailing him; but he managed to calm her, and bidding me hasten home to mamma, he and this strange woman walked together to our house. They were all the time engaged in earnest conversation; and papa, when he got home, took her up stairs into his study, where they were closeted for a long time. At last she went away, and then papa sent for me, and asked me if you had ever told me how the ring came into your possession. I said you had informed me that you purchased it in Boston; and that was all I knew about it. He said no more; but every day since then, he and this lady, whose name I have never heard, for he never says anything to mamma or me about her, have been closeted together; and whenever I have chanced to meet her, she has given me a most scrup-

tinizing glance, and looked at the ring as though she would like to tear it from my fingers. Now, dear William, if there be any mystery attached to this ring, do tell me about it, for I am dying with anxiety to know the cause of all these singular proceedings. * * * * I am going to the post-office to post this letter to-night, and papa has just placed a letter for you and one for Mr. Ogilvie into my hands, both of which letters he wishes me to post with mine. Perhaps papa's letter to you may explain. If it does, let me know when you write again.

Yours ever faithfully and affectionately,

JESSICA DEANE.'

"I can't make head or tail out of that epistle," exclaimed the young man, whom the reader will already have recognized as William Martin. "But, I declare, in my anxiety to read Jessie's letter, I have forgotten Mr. Deane's," and he took up the letter from his former patron in Augusta, and breaking the seal, read as follows :

"AUGUSTA, ME., — 18—.

"DEAR WILLIAM—

I have herewith sent a letter to Mr. Ogilvie, from whom I am happy to hear of your continued good behavior and rapid progress in your studies. I hope to live to see you an ornament to the bar, my dear boy, and I need not add that your relations with regard to my darling Jessie, cause me to feel still greater interest in your progress, and greater pleasure in your good conduct than I, perhaps, might otherwise do. The letter to Mr. Ogilvie is in allusion to you and your family, especially your sister Sarah. Mr. O. will in all probability shortly enlighten you as to its contents. By-the-by, William, Jessie wears a ring that you gave her some time ago. You would confer a great favor upon me if you will inform me minutely, how it came into your possession. I have no doubt you obtained it honorably; but there is a mystery of a singular nature connected with it, which interests me exceedingly. My wife desires to be kindly remembered to you, and expressed a hope that you will visit Augusta, during the course of the summer.

Your friend and well wisher.

ANDREW DEANE.

"P. S. I have said nothing respecting Jessie since I find she is writing to you herself.

A. D."

"More mystery!" exclaimed the young man, after having finished the perusal of Mr. Deane's letter. "What a confounded fuss about that foolish ring. Where did I get it from? Why I bought it of a jeweller, to be sure, as most people do when they want to send such trinkets to their sweethearts. I wish it had been at the bottom of Boston Bay, though, before there had been this fuss made about it, and that I had purchased something else for Jessie——"

"Mr. Ogilvie wishes to see you in the library, sir," said a servant, opening the door of William Martin's room, and interrupting his soliloquy.

"Now I hope I shall have the mystery explained," said the young man to himself as he descended to the library.

"Take a seat, William," said Mr. Ogilvie, as the young man entered. "I wish to have a little conversation with you with regard to a communication I have just received from your former friend, Mr. Deane, of Augusta. I have never heard anything respecting your family or relatives; but if you have no objection, it is necessary that I should now receive some information of that kind. Who was your father, William?"

"An officer in the United States army, sir," said the young man, proudly.

"Ah, I recollect; Mr. Deane said something of that kind when you came here first; but you had a grandfather, I presume," added Mr. Ogilvie, smilingly. "Who and what was he?"

"He was an Englishman, and in his youth he held a commission in the British army, I believe; but he came while still young to the United States, became a citizen, and purchased a farm near Camden (Me.), on which my father resided after he had quitted the service; there I was born, and there my mother still resides."

"Humph! have you ever heard your mother mention anything about having wealthy relatives in England?"

"I have heard her say something to that purport, but I have paid little attention to it."

"Your mother is an Englishwoman, I believe?"

"Yes, sir; but she came to America with her parents when a child."

"What was her name previously to her marriage—that is, what is the surname of her family?"

"Donaldson, sir."

Mr. Ogilvie looked at a letter he held in his hand. "You have a sister?" he continued.

"Yes, sir."

"And her name?"

"Is Sarah Donaldson Martin."

"So far so good. Mr. Deane writes me to say that he has lately made the acquaintance of a lady in Augusta, who has for some time past resided in a state of great seclusion in that city, although she is reputed to be possessed of considerable property. Her name is Sarah Donaldson; she is a maiden lady, considerably advanced in years. This lady came, it appears, to the United States on a tour of pleasure, being partially actuated to do so, in the hope of discovering a niece, named after herself, who had, she learnt, married an officer of the United States Army, but of whose fortunes she had heard but little, as she had come to this country when an infant, with her parents, both of whom died while she was yet a mere girl. Mrs. Donaldson, notwithstanding she is a maiden lady, assumes the title of matronhood, and she was accompanied hither by a younger brother, a widower, and his daughter, whom she had brought up from a child, and to whom she was devotedly attached. Shortly after their arrival in Boston, they called at a jeweller's store in that city, and ordered a ring to be manufactured for the young lady who accompanied them. It appears that a ring of singular construction, belonging to the young lady's mother, whose name was Jemima, had been accidentally lost overboard on the passage from England. Their object was to obtain one of exactly similar pattern for the young lady to wear. It was purchased, and shortly afterwards the party left Boston for New York. Mrs. Donaldson, being in rather feeble health, remained in the city, while her brother and his child proceeded on a tour up the Hudson, with the intention of visiting the northern and western part of the State. They were never again heard of; for, not returning at the time they were expected, the anxiety suffered by Mrs. Donaldson slightly affected her intellect, and probably the inquiries respecting them, that would otherwise have been instituted, were not made. Mrs. Donaldson, however, on her partial recovery—though I believe to this day she is not exactly *compos mentis*, if my friend Deane judges correctly—removed to Augusta, having heard that her niece resided somewhere in the State of Maine, with the intention, no doubt, of still further prosecuting her inquiries respecting her; but with

an inconsistency frequently found in people in her unhappy condition, when she reached Augusta her energies failed her, and she has ever since lived the life of a recluse in that city. A short time since she, by chance, met with Mr. Deane's daughter, and her attention was accidentally drawn to a ring which the young lady wore upon her finger, which she asserted, and still asserts, is the identical ring that she had made in Boston. She has since that period had several interviews with Mr. Deane, who has obtained this information from her, and who was in the first instance struck with the name of Donaldson, when the lady observed that she had a niece of that name residing in Maine, if she were, indeed, still living, who had married an American officer of the name of Martin. Mr. Deane, it appears, had heard or fancied he had heard that Donaldson was your mother's maiden name. Mrs. Donaldson, whose health is rapidly declining, and who cannot last long, has expressed her intention of leaving her property to her grand niece, subject to the mother's control, until the girl be of sufficient age to take care of it herself—provided the child has been christened by the family name of Donaldson. It seems she heard by some means or other that such was the case before she left England; though, Mr. Deane says, she talks so incoherently in this matter that it is difficult to make out her meaning. Failing the discovery of her niece, the property will be left to the heirs of a family named Seymour, with which the Donaldsons seem to have been related or in some way connected. This is all that Deane explains at present; but you see, now, William, the necessity of your giving such information as you are able with regard to the ring, which has led to this *éclaircissement*."

"Upon my word, sir," said the young man, "I know nothing more of the ring than this: I went into the store of Mr. —, in this city, some time since, and purchased a singular looking, antique ring, inside of which I had the letter J engraved, and then I sent the ring as a present to Miss Jessica Deane."

"In that case I will call upon the jeweller," replied Mr. Ogilvie. "Perhaps he may afford us some further information with regard to this matter. It is worth some little investigation, for there is a great probability that in the event of matters being properly explained, your family will benefit from the wealth of this old lady. Let me see; how many brothers have you?"

"One only—Frank, who is now at sea. But it is strange

that we have not heard from him since he sailed on board a vessel belonging to Mr. Mordant bound to the coast of Africa, under the command of Captain Seymour, although the vessel has since returned from that voyage and sailed again. Mother is getting very anxious regarding him."

Mr. Ogilvie looked at the letter sent by Mr. Deane. "Seymour," he said, "that is the name mentioned as the probable residuary legatee of Mrs. Donaldson. Do you know, or have you ever heard of any family in England of that name, supposed to be in any way related to or connected with your mother's friends?"

"No, sir, not that I am aware of."

"Well, I presume that this is all the information I can glean at present. I will see Mr. —, the jeweller to-day, and this evening I will write to Mr. Deane."

In the course of the day, true to his promise, Mr. Ogilvie called at the store of the jeweller, and made inquiries respecting the mysterious ring. "Do you recollect," inquired he, "to whom you sold a ring of the description I speak of?"

"I do," said the jeweller, "for to tell the truth, Mr. Ogilvie, there are some strange circumstances connected with the sale." The merchant reached down his ledger and referred to the supposed date of the sale of the first ring. "Ah," continued he, "I was right; it is nearly three years ago since a gentleman, of perhaps about forty years of age, accompanied by a lady greatly his senior, yet sufficiently resembling him to warrant the supposition that she was an elder sister, came to my store and ordered a ring of peculiar workmanship to be manufactured. They were strangers, and I should judge English people. The ring was made and delivered; but the beauty and singularity of its setting led me, merely out of a whim, to manufacture another exactly like it for myself. However, I did not wear it, and after retaining it for some time I exposed it for sale. Shortly afterwards it was purchased by a gentleman, who, singularly enough, ordered the letter J to be engraved inside, which had been ordered to be engraved on the first ring. I should not, however, have thought much of this, had not I manufactured two others, both of which were sold, and the purchasers of both ordered the same letter to be engraved. I was so struck with these singular coincidences, that I mentioned the subject to my partner. However, I made no more of the rings, and I had almost forgotten the matter until you mentioned it to-day. Now, may I ask, sir, what is the reason

of these inquiries being made. You will excuse me; but my curiosity is strongly excited, and I think you will acknowledge naturally enough."

"Really Mr. —, at present I am unable to inform you. I have reason to believe, however, that some singular *dénouements* will be made through these rings, and I promise you that when I learn the secret myself, I will satisfy your curiosity. By the bye, what was the date of the sale of the first of these rings?"

The tradesman again referred to his books. "On the 24th of August 18—, I sold the ring to the lady and gentleman I have mentioned," said he.

"The 24th of August 18—," said Mr. Ogilvie, noting the date on his tablets—"Good morning, Mr. —," and so saying he left the store of the jeweller.

"These duplicated sales of similar rings explain William's account of the manner in which he came into possession of the ring," he soliloquised, as he walked homewards, "and it also explains how the letter J should have been engraved upon it; but it is, indeed, a strange series of coincidences—the fact of the two other purchasers ordering the same letter to be engraved on each of their rings."

Mr. Ogilvie wrote to Mr. Deane that same evening, explaining the particulars he had gathered, and mentioning, in parenthesis, though he did not place much importance to the matter, since there might be numerous families of the same name, that a brother of William Martin who was at sea—had sailed some time previous on a voyage, the destination of the vessel unknown, under the command of Captain Seymour, the vessel being owned by a New York merchant of the name of Mordant.

A few weeks subsequently to this a vessel arrived in Boston from the coast of Africa, and on board of her was Frank Martin—who had been invalided home from the G——, frigate. The first inquiries of the young sailor, whose health had been nearly restored during the voyage home, was after his brother William, who he knew was in Boston; and in the course of a few hours after his arrival, the long-absent sailor surprised his brother by appearing before him, sunburnt as an Indian, in Mr. Ogilvie's office.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Birth of Zuleika's Infant—Some Account of the Parentage of Zuleika.

"From that mysterious hour, the fate
Of this new, glorious being dwelt
Upon my spirit—early—late—
Whate'er I did—whate'er I felt,
The thought of what might yet befall
That matchless creature, mixed with all."

It is early morn in Zuleika's Isle. The bright sun has but now gilded the mirror-like bay with his cheering beams, and the birds, aroused from their light slumbers, by the genial warmth and the cheerful light shed by his rays, have united their matin songs in tuneful chorus; the many and bright-hued convolvulus has opened her blossoms and flowers, glittering with pearly dew, to the gladness of the morning; the boughs and leaves of the rustling trees, gently bending and waving to the pressure of the soft zephyrs, fresh from the sea, add to the tuneful harmony of nature—the sweetest, freshest, purest, and the best; the bright green herbiage of the newly mown sward glitters in the morning sunbeams, as though some beneficent, loving fairy hand had strewn the level expanse with diamonds during the darkness of night to gratify the eyes of mortals when they awoke from their slumbers; the balm of a thousand odoriferous flowers blends its sweet perfume with the refreshing air of the newly-born day, and the younglings of the flocks and herds skip to and fro in the meadows, in all the lightsome joyousness, the wild exuberant delight of happiness and unconscious innocence.

In the distance, embosomed amidst fragrant shrubs and bright green foliage, stands the cottage of Zuleika. But where is she? The young Greek girl has not been, as is her wont, awakened from her happy dreams by the light and warmth of the sun's faint morning rays, as they stream through the open lattice of her chamber. She is slumbering still now, slumbering peacefully; yet conscious, even amidst her slumbers, of a mysterious double existence; for, pillowed upon her bosom, and sleeping quietly, is a fair infant, who has but during the night awakened into birth and life, and who now for





MARCA AND ZOE.

"But apart from the joyous groups, down by the margin of the sea, earnestly engaged in conversation, to judge from the action it calls forth, stand two females, both tall in stature—both upright as the cedur of their native islands."

"The reader will readily recognzie in these two females—Marca, the dark prophet of the isles, and Zoe—the self-acknowledged mother of Zuleika."

the first time feels the gentle breeze, tempered by the warmth of the sun's rays, fan her smooth and delicate cheek. There is a feeble wail, and the young mother, sensitive to the slightest sound from the lips of her newly-born babe, opens her heavy eyelids, and smiling sweetly, and pressing the child more closely to her bosom, murmurs, "I wish that *he* were here," and the mother and babe slumber again.

There are sounds of merriment and rejoicing in Zuleika's Isle, for the fair and gentle mistress of its self-appointed lord has already won the love of the simple inhabitants, and it is known that she has given birth to a female child; and the men forego, for this day, their customary employment. The fishing-boats lie idle upon the strand to-day, and the inhabitants assemble together in groups and indulge in mysterious whisperings, suggestive, we must fain believe, of pleasurable ideas, for their kindly, comely countenances beam with triumphant smiles; and amongst the groves, and within the coverts of the trees, the maidens weave chaplets from the store of wild flowers gathered by the happy youths, and many a gentle, persuasive whisper is poured into the ear of coy, coquettish maidens, by ardent swains, calling the mantling blush to the cheek and the soft reproof to the lips; but the accompanying, encouraging smile tells plainly that the too bold flattery is not ungraciously received, and the offence may be repeated, aye, again and again, without risk of giving heinous offence.

And now each maiden has woven herself a garland, and a ring is formed upon the soft, smooth lawn, and the lute and the cymbal fill the air with melody, and twinkling feet trip lightly to the measure upon the yielding turf, keeping time to the primitive music; and forms, more graceful than those of the gazelle, wheel rapidly round the circle, charming and, at the same time, bewildering the eye with their rapid motions and gracefully intricate evolutions; and staid matrons, seated on the grass, gaze on the festive scene with delight, as they recall to memory the happy hours of days and years gone by, when, in the joyousness of their own girlhood, they danced with their lovers to the same tinkling measure, and with the like feelings of innocent light-heartedness. It is a day of jubilee in Zuleika's Isle—the Greeks keep holiday.

But, far apart from the joyous groups, down by the margin of the sea, earnestly engaged in conversation, to judge from the action it calls forth, stand two females, both tall in stature—both upright as the cedar of their native islands. One of

them, however, though still apparently hale and strong, and possessed of the fire and energy of youth, betrays, in her haggard, wrinkled visage, the marks of extreme age. In her right hand she holds a sappling of some six feet in length, not, as it seems, for the purpose of support, but rather to serve as a wand, by the aid of which she may give more energy and effect to her remarks, for ever and anon she waves it in the air and points to the isles whose shadows are seen in the distant horizon, and now she stamps it firmly in the sand, as though to mark the intensity of her words.

The other, although long past the bloom of youth, or even the comeliness of early matronhood, still bears traces of having at one time been the possessor of rare though savage beauty; her large black eyes, shaded by long silken lashes, glisten like gems of sparkling jet beneath her dark, heavy, arched eyebrows—and the fresh breezes of the sea, or, perchance, the interest of the conversation in which she is so earnestly engaged, have called a ruddy glow to her sunburnt cheeks.

The reader will readily recognize in these two females—Marca, the dark prophet of the Isles, and Zoe, the self-acknowledged mother of Zuleika.

Let us listen to the concluding remarks of their conversation.

“Then Vincenzo’s hated line is to renew its strength in this young scion of the daughter of his scattered race,” said Zoe, her eyes glaring with wild energy—almost with fury as she spoke.

“Fear not that,” replied Marca, “the infant is a girl, and there is no harm to dread from its influence; besides, the secret remains locked in our own bosoms. It is our fault if we betray it. Were the babe a boy it might be otherwise; I might then counsel his destruction; but, Zoe, our vengeance should be sated now. We have worked it well. Let the innocent infant live; I am growing old; the dark shadows of the grave are already visible to me; I would fain do one deed of mercy before my eyes close in death.”

“I would have vengeance to the last,” answered Zoe; “but, be it as you say. Let this minion live, at least for the present; perchance the Frank who bought the girl of me for 800 piastres; ha! ha! it was a shrewd bargain—and who married her, and is the father of her child, may remove her hence. If so it is well. I will forego my sworn vengeance to blight and blast the sons and daughters of Vincenzo—even to the latest

generation. If she remains here she may be watched, and woe to her and her's, should she discover the secret that surrounds her birth. Mother, *you* have lived a long lifetime of vengeance. *You* may well be sated, not so with *me*. I have been foiled and foiled again; but each time my thirst for revenge has only grown stronger."

"I have promised the Frank renegade, that no harm shall happen to his dainty bride while he is absent," replied the elder woman sententiously—"the word of Marca must not be lightly broken."

"It is enough," answered Zoe, apparently acquiescing though unwillingly to the wishes of Marca.

"It is strange," she continued, "that until of late we have never met since the day you sold me to the hateful embraces of Vincenzo," and as she uttered the last words her eyes seemed to flash with keen but suppressed hatred towards her mother.

"I fled to the Negropont, after my husband was betrayed by the Scio chieftain, who claimed you as his bride; but you wrong me, Zoe—I never sold you to Vincenzo's harem."

"It matters not," returned Zoe.

"And you!" asked Marca. "It is long since we have spoken together for any length of time. We are alone now; the billows of the ocean, and the breezes of the atmosphere can alone listen to our voices. What led you to hate Vincenzo with such unrelenting, bitter hatred? You had no reason to hate him as I had, albeit you did not love him."

"Listen and I will tell you," returned Zoe:

"It is true I did not love Vincenzo—but I was mistress of his harem and Queen of his isle until he, growing sated with me, took another bride—a fair Circassian, whom he had captured from the harem of her Turkish lord in one of his predatory excursions on the coast of this Bay of Salonica that lies spread before us. From that hour my reign was over. I had borne a son to Vincenzo. *He* still lives to aid me in working out my full measure of vengeance; but, let that pass. My son was despised, cast off by his father when his fresh young Circassian bride was taken into favor. *He* became an out-cast, and his mother a dependent on the caprices of another. I knew not till then that I cared so much for Vincenzo, but he had treated me well, and I had almost learn't to love him.

"For four long years I brooded over my sorrows, until discontent grew into hatred, and gradually the desire of revenge

engrossed my soul. I bided my time. Another year passed slowly by. The Circassian, Leila, still retained her power over her lord. She had borne him a daughter, whom he called Mirza, within a year from the time he brought her to his harem, and during this fifth year, a second daughter, Bedita, was born. My plan was resolved upon : I watched the opportunity, and one day when Mirza was wandering alone by the seaside, I had her seized—for I had my partisans still, who hated their chief, and she was carried off to Constantinople and sold, to grace the Sultan's harem. I had a double revenge; for I watched with delight the anger of the father and the anguish of the mother; while my girdle was weighty with the pistres that the girl's marvellous beauty had drawn from the purse of the slave merchant. From that day forward, the haughty, dainty Leila pined away by slow degrees beneath the ravages of an insidious disease, which impaired her beauty and rendered her loathsome to the proud Vincenzo. Listen !—she died from the effects of a slow but acrid poison, by me administered in minute potions, and *I*, pretending to soothe her, watched by her dying bed, alone; for Vincenzo shunned her, then : and when her spirit was about to take its flight, I whispered in her ear, “ it was *I*, Zoe, who sold your first-born, Mirza, to the Mahommedan tyrant. It is *I*, Zoe, who have administered the poison, which has brought you to this bed of death and destroyed your beauty, and alienated the affections of your *loving* lord ; and, hearken, Leila : You have another daughter; she, too, shall feed the lusts and pride of the detested Mussulman, and shall live to curse the mother who gave her birth. The wretched woman shrieked aloud in agony as I uttered this, and on the wings of that shriek her spirit took its flight. Ha ! ha ! was not I revenged ?”

“ Bedita was not sold to the Turks,” said Marca.

“ No : this Frank offered a higher price, and I sold her to him. He thought I was her mother, and so Bedita thought; for during her mother's illness, and after her death, she was nursed and tended by me.”

“ And Vincenzo—how long did he live after the conspiracy had ripened which I set on foot to subvert his power in these islands ?”

“ Not long. I would tell you the manner of his death, and relate my son's history, but I see people approaching us. Another time you shall know more—and *I* must hear *your* history.

The two women parted and walked carelessly in opposite directions, as a party of pleasure seekers drew near the beach.

* * * * *

Let us now enter the chamber of Zuleika.

The young mother is seated on her bed, propped up with pillows, and by her side stands Jane Miller, not now attired in the clothing of a sailor boy ; but in a garb of Greek fashion more befitting her sex. She has resolved to continue her disguise no longer. She is bending over the couch, and whispering words of consolation to the delighted mother, who is watching with eager gaze the unconscious babe, lying asleep in the arms of the negress attendant, Julia, who is sitting near the casement.

"Oh, that George were here to see his child," murmurs Zuleika from time to time, as Jane Miller tells how proud the father will be to see the infant, and dilates upon those points of resemblance to the father in the babe's features, which none but woman can discern.

"And is there no resemblance to me?" asks Zuleika. "I would wish my child to resemble both her father and her mother. George, methinks, would wish that himself."

"The eyes are yours," answered Jane, "and so is the contour of the face ; but the nose and mouth are the counterparts of her father's. What name shall you call her?"

"George wished me to call the child Zuleika, if it should prove a girl," answered the young mother. "It shall be as he desired."

There was a few moments silence, for Zuleika was weak and easily fatigued with speaking. At length she said—half unconsciously as though thinking aloud, for her thoughts dwelt continually upon her husband—"George has been a long time absent now. He must soon return."

"It is hardly three months since he left the island, dear Zuleika," said Jane. "He said he should be five months absent. We cannot expect him yet."

"Oh, that he were here," answered Zuleika, repeating aloud the constant burden of her thoughts ; "Do you know, Jane, it may be folly—weakness on my part ; but, for some nights before the birth of my babe, I had strangely frightful dreams! I thought there was some secret evil brewing that would work out the destruction of my husband and my child—and, kind and attentive as the aged Marca has become since George has been absent—how silly I was to be frightened of her—it

always seemed as though she were mixed up in these horrible visions. I fancied I saw her gloating over my misery ;—but, if aught were to happen to George, I should not live long to lament his loss. I should go and rejoin him, with my child, in another and a happier world.”

“ You must strive to banish these foolish fancies,” said Jane, “ they are only created by your anxiety and weakness. You must look forward to a happy re-union with your husband, in a month or two more, and recollect his promise, that when he returns you are to be parted no more on earth.”

“ Yes, George promised he would never leave me again,” said Zuleika, and her pale face brightened up with the happy thought. But, although Jane Miller spoke thus encouragingly to the youthful mother, her heart was filled with anxious forebodings. She feared that retribution would overtake Seymour, though she was ignorant of a tithe of his crimes—and she knew that should evil occur to him, Zuleika spoke truly when she said that she should not long survive him. Besides—although Marca had been kind to Zuleika since her husband’s absence—had even been assiduous in her intentions—there was something indescribable in the manner of the aged sibyl—which, setting aside her witch-like appearance, had rendered her—though she strove to hide her fears—a source of dislike and terror to Jane.

Zuleika sank upon the pillow and fell into a slumber, and Jane sat watching by her side—watching anxiously—for the sleep of the pale young mother was uneasy, and ever and anon she would murmur words of portentous warning, as though the seals of prophesy were opened to her in her dreams ; and twice she started up, uttering in tones of anguish :

“ My babe! my babe! No, George, they shall not touch my babe!” and her eyes sought the form of the infant as it still lay sleeping in the nurse’s lap, and she smiled at the foolish terror of her dreams, and composed herself to sleep again. And while she slumbered, Marca came into the cottage, and ascending the stairs with noiseless step, entered the bed-chamber, and advancing to the nurse, stooped and gazed steadily into the face of the sleeping child. Then, apparently satisfied with her scrutiny, she seated herself quietly by the couch of the mother, and, greatly to the annoyance of Jane Miller—though she dared not express the displeasure she felt—she joined her in her vigils over the slumbers of Zuleika.

CHAPTER XXIX.

In which King Kettle shows that he possesses as great Skill in Diplomacy as more Civilized Potentates—Mr. Mordant hears more Unwelcome News, and receives a visit from the Yankee Mate, Tolcroft.

MR. TOLCROFT, the chief officer and temporary commander of the Albatross, had navigated the vessel safely into the accustomed port in the Loango country, and Tolcroft had so far succeeded in securing the object of the voyage as to have obtained the promise of a prime cargo of slaves from the famous King Kettle; but his majesty of Loango had lately been visited by a missionary, who had accompanied one of the crusiers during an excursion along the coast, and what between the arguments—somewhat dictatorial—of the commander of the crusier, and the soft persuasions of the missionary, and the gratification he had felt in the presentation of a bran new marine's regimental coat with gorgeous blue worsted epaulettes, the worthy monarch had experienced some twinges of conscience, and began to consider whether he was actually acting in good faith towards his ally and good sister potentate, Queen Victoria, of Great Britain, with whom he had entered into a treaty offensive and defensive, half a dozen times over, to exert his benign influence to suppress the slave trade throughout his dominions, and to render such aid as lay in his power to effect the capture of any slavers that should call along the coast. Still, it was a matter of serious moment to King Kettle, for although the scarlet regimental coat, and the twinges of conscience, and the sensations of pride at being called "my brother" by the great white Queen, who kept her court on the other side of sun-set, had done much to awaken a right feeling in the bosom of the sable monarch, yet there were other motives to be considered, and, like a good many other potentates, King Kettle felt that he must necessarily make conscience subservient to interest, if he hoped to maintain a financial balance on the right side of his exchequer. Red coats and worsted epaulettes, and flummery, were all very well in their way; but the disposal of one good cargo of slaves would, he knew by experience, go much further to fill the coffers of his money chest in his good capital of cane

palaces and mud houses—the city of Loango. Consequently, when the Albatross arrived at Majumba, King Kettle was somewhat in a state of perplexity. He had a fine lot of slaves at Quoddah, who had been eating him, to use a vulgar phrase, out of house and home, during the long period they had been kept in seclusion, in consequence of the visit of the man-of-war schooner; besides, the paddy (rice) crops had failed, and the conjurors had told him that it was necessary, to avert a famine, to sacrifice fifty slaves to *Cassa Jumba*, as the wrath of the *Obeah* had been kindled in consequence of the long *palaver* the monarch had held with the Englishmen. His Majesty's exchequer, too, had run so low, during this long interlude, that he had been under the necessity of imposing an income tax of one peck on the bushel of rice, which sadly oppressed his subjects, who had begun to cry out for measures of reform, and to threaten to overturn the ministry and sacrifice the ministers themselves—not on the altar of political intrigue, but on that of the great *Jumba* himself—the Devil of the country—a much more expedient and expeditious method of getting rid of obnoxious ministers than that practiced in more refined communities. King Kettle had so far followed the advice of the conjurors as to make a great show for his people and kill three of the oldest of his wives, who had grown fat and lazy, and whom he thought he could make no better use of, and thus he hoped to appease the wrath of the *Obeah*, and postpone the sacrifice of the slaves, who would fetch a good price when the next slaver arrived; but the blight in the *paddy* fields still continued and his Majesty's subjects still grumbled more and more, as day after day they brought their heavy tribute of rice and emptied it into the royal treasury. In a word, King Kettle was in a quandary.

At this period of disaffection, shortly after the man-of-war schooner had sailed, the Albatross arrived on the coast; but it was soon evident to the keen eye of the King that her master-spirit was no longer on board, to superintend the affairs of the vessel. The rigid discipline usually maintained on board the beautiful craft was greatly relaxed—drunkenness and insubordination had gained the upper hand, and, although Tolcroft and his brother officers managed the trading portion of their business with commendable shrewdness, when the duties of the day were over, the vessel's decks became a scene of lawless licentiousness.

King Kettle summoned a meeting of his privy council, and

submitted a respectful request to the chief conjuror and magician of the empire, to meet them at the board. The great man came, attended by a retinue of his followers, one of whom carried him on his shoulders, so that his sacred feet were not contaminated by the dust of the earth. The great high priest was handsomely dressed in a robe of lion's skin, so fashioned that the skin of the head formed a *capote*, and being drawn over the head of the conjuror, gave him a terrific and, at the same time, a dignified aspect, the effect of which was greatly enhanced by the tasteful arrangement of various and many-colored snakes' skins, which were fastened around his neck, and arranged in fanciful festoons round his arms, body, and legs—added to which a magnificent lion's tail, artificially stiffened, was affixed to his posterior, sticking out at an angle of forty-five degrees, full six feet from his body. Altogether, the mighty conjuror looked awfully and impressively grand. He was received with all the honors due to his sacred office. King Kettle danced before him through the village *in propria persona*, his attendants playing an enlivening strain upon bamboo flutes and a species of drum made of monkey's hide, and, at the door of the council hut, the women sat around in groups, heaping handfuls of dust on their heads, and writhing and grovelling on the earth like so many serpents, at the same time singing a wild chorus, extolling the might and power, the glory and the beauty of the *Cassa Jumba* and his great high priest. As soon as the door of the council chamber was closed, the magician graciously signified his desire that the women should be commanded to cease their infernal noise; and in *his* turn King Kettle, anxious to do all homage to his distinguished visitor, signified *his* gracious permission for them to retire, by going out amongst them himself and kicking them away. The conjuror then asked for some rum, which was handed to him, and after having imbibed a huge draught, he declared himself ready to listen to his Majesty the King and the mighty chiefs in council assembled.

We dare not penetrate into the mysteries of the solemn conclave; the chiefs and the conjurors were closeted for some hours, and the result of their deliberations will be gleaned from what followed. That the meeting was harmonious and satisfactory to all, may be assumed, however, from the fact that at the expiration of the session the great conjuror and King Kettle were borne away upon the shoulders of their attendants, both in a condition of beastly intoxication, while it was spread

through the village that the great *Cassa Jumba* (the devil himself) had deigned to enter in *spirit*, into the heads of the King and the High Priest, and the impost would no doubt be soon removed, and the threatened famine averted.

As soon as King Kettle had recovered from the headache and the symptoms of nausea which had supervened when the *spirit* had departed from his brain, he went on board the slaver, and concluded a satisfactory bargain with Tolcroft to furnish him with five hundred slaves, with all possible dispatch, expressing his regret at the same time that several days must necessarily elapse before they could be brought down from the depot at Quoddah.

Having settled this matter, his majesty dispatched his prime minister to the city of Loango, the capital of the country of that name, which is situated some seventy miles to the southward of Majumba, with information to the captain of the man-of-war schooner, which was believed still to be at anchor off the city, to the effect that the noted slave ship, the *Albatross*, was in port, and that if the captain would come to Majumba on a certain day, he could easily capture her—loaded with negroes—and thus secure a famous prize, for which information his majesty trusted the captain would take him into favorable consideration, and not fail to remember him to his beloved sister, the Queen of England.

This was of course good news to the officers and crew of the Queen's ship, and they failed not to avail themselves of it, allowing sufficient time to elapse, however, before they made their appearance off Majumba, for the slaver to perfect her loading.

Meanwhile King Kettle got his slaves down from the depot, and placed all on board but fifty, receiving the price stipulated for the whole number; but reserving fifty of the women and children to the last, on the plea that they needed to recruit their strength as much as possible before being confined in the baleful atmosphere of the ship's hold. Had the shrewd Captain Seymour been on board the *Albatross*, he might have had his suspicions aroused by this extraordinary show of humanity on the part of King Kettle, but it was not so with Tolcroft and his subordinates, who were rather glad of the opportunity afforded them of keeping the crowded 'tween decks as free as possible until the vessel sailed. Slaves, to the number of four hundred and fifty, were closely packed on board the ship, which still lay at anchor in a narrow inlet, scarcely a rod from

the shore on either side. The remaining fifty were to be taken on board the following morning, after which the vessel was to sail, and this night was to be one of jovial carousal in honor of having so far successfully accomplished the object of the voyage.

By midnight scarcely a soul on board the Albatross was sober, save the miserable wretches who were confined beneath the hatches on the crowded slave deck. *They* lay in heaps, groaning and struggling in all the horrors of mental and bodily agony.

There was a nominal watch kept on deck, but the approach of the schooner had not been perceived, and she cast anchor almost at the mouth of the inlet without any alarm being given. Boats were lowered, and manned and armed, and they proceeded up the inlet pulling with muffled oars, and secured from observation by the dense breeze which arose from the water, until they had approached within a few yards of the devoted slaver. Then the half drunken watch perceived their approach, and firing a pistol off at random, he gave the alarm to his comrades; but it was too late, even had the officers and crew been in a situation to offer resistance. They reeled and stumbled up from their carouse, hastily arming themselves with such weapons as came most readily to hand; but the man-of-war's men had in the meantime gained the deck, and the conflict was short and decisive—five of the drunken seamen of the slaver, besides Allan and Perrin, the second and third officers, were killed, and the red flag of England was run up to the gaff end of the Albatross, and the beautiful vessel declared to be the lawful prize of Her Majesty's schooner Audacious. She was a famous prize, for besides the head money that would be paid for the slaves on board, she was amply provided with stores and provisions, and the vessel herself was certain of selling for a very large sum of money. King Kettle was readily promised a handsome reward for the part he had acted in giving information, and thus he not only secured the price of the whole number of his slaves from Tolcroft, but succeeded in reserving fifty of the finest amongst the women and children to offer as a propitiatory sacrifice to *Cassa Jumba*; he not only satisfied the superstitions of the conjurers and the blood-thirsty cravings of his subjects, but he likewise received a handsome douceur in the shape of bounty money, into the bargain.

The arrangements determined upon in the great council were admirably carried out—*Cassa Jumba* had not fuddled the brains of his devotees for nothing.

Before daylight the crew of the slaver were heavily ironed and confined under hatches amongst the slaves ; the dead had been ruthlessly thrown overboard during the night, and it was thought by the slaver's crew, as well as by the captors, that the whole of the officers had been slain, for none of them were to be found in the morning. This, however, was not the case. Tolcroft, the chief, had succeeded in making his escape during the affray, in a dingie belonging to the ship, and had paddled out to sea. A prize crew was put on board the *Albatross*, and she was sent to Sierra Leone to be condemned, and in the course of a day or two the *Audacious* sailed also, it being requisite that the captain should be in Sierra Leone when the Admiralty court sat.

Not placing too implicit faith in the honesty of King Kettle, the captain of the schooner had remained behind a day or two to search the village, and ascertain whether any more slaves were confined there ; but King Kettle had carefully secreted the women and children, and the *Audacious* sailed without her commander having discovered how egregiously he had been duped by the cunning Loango chief.

When she had fairly left the harbor, the horrid rites of the sacrifice to *Cassa Jumba* commenced ; the women and children, half dead with terror—for well they knew their doom, from the preparations that were going forward—were brought out from their hiding-places ; faggots were piled around the great square in the centre of the village, and after being scourged until the blood flowed from them in torrents, the women were burned alive, amidst the frantic shouts of the savages, and the devilish incantations of the conjurers. The children were reserved for a still more dreadful fate. Cords, woven from cocoa-nut fibres, were stretched from tree to tree, along the square, over the still smouldering ashes of the hapless women, and the children were tied together by the legs, and strung head downwards along the cords ; fresh faggots were piled on the ashes of the victims already sacrificed, and the fires were again lighted ; and as the flames and smoke ascended, the tom-toms beat more loudly, the bamboo flutes whistled more shrilly, and the savages, frantic with unhallowed passions, shouted, and danced, and screamed, and rolled upon the earth, as though possessed with devils, while above all, could be heard the agonized shrieks of the infant victims, as they struggled together—tearing each other's flesh with their finger nails in the intensity of the torture to which they were subjected.

At length the shrieks grew fainter and less frequent, as, one by one, the hapless victims died, half smothered by the smoke, half roasted by the flickering flames, and the rope parted, and the dead bodies dropped into the fires, which flamed up as if greedy to consume them to ashes. And now the savages, who had looked on, lay panting on the earth for very weariness, while the conjurers gathered together the black, clammy ashes, and scattered them over the reeking bodies of the multitude, rendering them repulsive in aspect to a hideous degree.*

Thus for hours they lay, till the cooler air of the evening revived them, when the charred remnants of the horrible sacrifice were cast into the river, as food for the alligators, and the great sacrifice to *Cassa Jumba* was over. The *Obeah's* wrath was appeased, and the famine was arrested—so said the conjurers—and King Kettle promised that the impost of rice should be removed.

Such is the description of a scene of cruelty by no means rare in this benighted land, and which may be considered partially as the result of the endeavor—conceived in humanity and a spirit of philanthropy, but rife with cruelty to the hapless slaves—to prevent the trade in human flesh, by the intervention of armed cruisers on the African coast. It is true that, since steamers have been employed on this duty, a better watch than formerly can be maintained; but it is known that, although supported at an immense cost, so far, hitherto, from preventing the abduction of negroes from the coast, the known vicinity of these cruisers has led to the closer packing of slaves, in less commodious vessels; to the sacrifice of thousands to the devilish superstitions of the savages on the coast, especially when their sale has been retarded and the expense of supporting them has become burdensome; while it is doubtful if one less has been brought from the interior, or whether the trade has in reality been lessened in the slightest degree. Only by keeping a numerous steam flotilla in continual activity on the whole length of the coast, is it possible that the trade can be prevented, and as regards the treaties entered into with native chiefs, they have time and time again been proved to be perfectly useless.

Tolerost, who, the reader will recollect, we mentioned had effected his escape from the Albatross, when she was boarded

* Repulsive as this description may be, such a sacrifice actually took place on the Lango coast two years since, and the cruelties described, so far from being exaggerated, are shorn of some of their most disgusting features, the details being altogether too horrible and indecent for minute description.

by the officers and crew of the cruiser, after two days' exposure, without food or water, fell in with a trading vessel, and was received on board. He stated that he had made his escape from a vessel which had been seized by the savages while dealing with them for ivory. He was landed at Benguela, whither the trader was bound, having been generously provided by his rescuers with clothing and such necessities as he required. There he shipped on board a vessel bound to the Cape of Good Hope, whence he obtained a berth on board an American vessel from Calcutta, bound to New York, which had touched at the Cape on her passage from the East Indies.

Let us now return to New York and ascertain how affairs had progressed there since the occurrence of the events described in a preceding chapter.

Mr. Mordant, the morning after he had received the letter from Mr. Grindley, left his home for the city at an earlier hour than usual. On his way he called at the store of the tailor and settled the account due by his son, at the same time warning the tailor not to allow Charles any further credit, excepting upon his own responsibility. He then, in no very pleasant frame of mind, hastened to his office to meet Mr. Grindley. He found that gentleman already waiting for him.

"Good morning, Grindley," said he. "I received a letter from you last night. What is the nature of the pressing emergency of which you speak?"

"I believe I stated, Mr. Mordant," replied Grindley, "that it had reference to the capture of the *Dolphin*, Junot's vessel. The fellow who gave information to the captain of the sloop-of-war, and whose testimony in court led to the condemnation of the vessel, has, I learn from your agent at Sierra Leone, let out hints that the slaver was partly owned by a merchant in New York—meaning yourself—and furthermore, the scoundrel has said that you have another vessel, wholly owned by yourself, upon the coast. Of course he alludes to the *Albatross*, and a vigilant look-out will be kept for her. However, she sails like a witch, and will manage to elude them, I trust, as she has done before. That is not the worst feature of the case. This fellow has given this information to a lawyer of low reputation in the colony, who has intimated to your agent that unless you make it worth his while to keep silent, he shall consider it his *duty* (mark the fellow's impudence) to write to New York and let the particulars he has heard be generally known. Now I have hitherto successfully managed this por-

tion of your business, and I would advise you to hush the matter up. The agent says he thinks the lawyer, who is poor as well as destitute of character, can be quieted by the payment of a thousand dollars, and that the sailor can be made to hold his tongue for a couple of hundred more. Of course, I leave it to your own better judgment ; but I should say, send the money by the next mail. In such matters as these there is no time to lose."

"But," said Mr. Mordant, "supposing I should pay the money, what security should I have that I shall not be subjected to other and still more exorbitant demands?"

"Why, my dear sir, though the man is destitute of any character, he still has a certain outward semblance of integrity to maintain, as he holds, I am given to understand, a small official appointment in the colony. If it were known that he had received hush money, he would be ruined. Now, we can make him give a receipt, specifying the terms on which he has received the money, and hold that receipt suspended, like the sword of Damocles, over his head, ready at any moment to fall upon him and hurl him headlong to ruin."

"What harm would it do me, supposing he fulfils the threats he has made. Who will pay attention to such vague reports, and if anybody should do so, how would they affect me?"

"What harm would it do! How would it affect you! My dear sir, excuse me; but I am surprised to hear you speak thus. What harm would it do if it were known or suspected that the wealthy and honorable merchant, Mr. Mordant, were connected in any shape with a business which is held felonious by the laws of the country? How would it affect you, sir, held up as a philanthropist and a leader amongst the abolitionist party, if it were surmised, however slight the grounds of the suspicion, that you were yourself an importer of slaves? I leave it to yourself to judge the effect that would be produced."

For some moments the merchant appeared irresolute how to act. In fact, though he endeavored to maintain an appearance of outward composure, his nerves were so unsettled by late events, that he scarcely knew what he was doing. At length he said—"Send a draft for the payment of the money, Grindley. Send what you think sufficient, and when the Albatross returns, I shall wash my hands of this business altogether. I have met, of late, with nothing but mishaps. Seymour, too, to have left me in the lurch, at this critical period as he has done."

After some further conversation regarding the capture of the Dolphin, and an examination into the accounts of that vessel, so as to ascertain the exact amount of the profit and loss, Mr. Grindley retired; but he had scarcely reached the street, before another visitor arrived. It was Mr. Harvey.

"Take a seat, Mr. Harvey," said Mr. Mordant, rather testily, for he was in anything but a happy humor; "to what cause am I indebted for a visit from you this morning?"

"I have called relative to that little matter—the estate in Jersey."

"I thought that matter was settled long ago," interrupted the merchant; "I'm sure I paid handsomely enough for it—three years' rental of the property."

"I hoped it was settled, myself, sir," replied the lawyer coldly; "but by some means the widow Miller has received an inkling of the state of affairs, and she has, I understand, been consulting a certain legal gentleman of my acquaintance upon the subject. I am afraid, sir, there is trouble brewing."

"Dear me, this is unfortunate," answered the merchant. "What had better be done?"

"I would advise a compromise. If you will permit me to see the widow, I may manage to effect some arrangement by which she will consent to take the estate as it now stands, and forego her claims to the back rents, which must amount to many thousands of dollars. I will make it appear that you have been an innocent party to the—the—excuse me—the fraud; and she will be delighted at your generosity in returning to her the estate, voluntarily, as it stands."

"And the three thousand dollars I paid you, for the express purpose of putting the evidence out of the way? that is lost I suppose."

"Under the circumstances, irrecoverably lost I fear, Mr. Mordant," answered the lawyer, with the utmost *sang froid*. (The money had long been made use of for his own purposes.)

"Ruin stares me in the face," thought Mr. Mordant; then he said, "I have heard some unpleasant intelligence, Mr. Harvey, which has utterly unfitted me for business to-day. I will not prolong this interview. In God's name, see Mrs. Miller, and represent things as favorably as possible; that is, if she has really any suspicion how matters stand. Perhaps she may be induced to dispose of the property, under the circumstances, on reasonable terms. You understand."

"I will do my best to put matters in a proper train," replied

the lawyer, as, shaking hands with the merchant, he quitted the office; but he added to himself, as he descended to the street, "she may dispose of the property on reasonable terms, but not to *you*, Mr. Mordant. No, no; I have you under my thumb now, and I will make you bleed freely or effect your ruin."

Mr. Mordant was, as he stated, utterly unfitted for any business that day; and at an early hour he left the office for his residence, hoping there to find quiet and repose, and to recover his customary equanimity; but he reckoned without his host. "Misfortunes never come singly," says the ancient adage. Never was the proverb more fully verified than in the instance of Mr. Mordant, at this period.

When he reached home he found a letter awaiting him, bearing the New Orleans post mark, and he recognized the handwriting, as that of Mr. Wilson. It ran as follows :

NEW ORLEANS, ———, 13—.

"MY DEAR SIR—

I am sorry to be compelled to write to you upon a subject of so distressing a nature, the more especially as I had ventured to hope that the marriage of your son with my ward Marie, would lead to a satisfactory arrangement as regards the settlement of our affairs, Marie, having under certain circumstances (that is to say, if she married with my consent), a good fortune at her own disposal. It was, therefore, with sentiments of delight, I witnessed the devotion of Mr. Charles, when he was in New Orleans last year, to Marie, who, to tell the truth, is a girl whose beauty any husband might be proud of—and whose disposition is amiable, while she has rendered herself proficient in all the accomplishments of the day. To my great regret, however, I discovered some time ago that Marie was averse to the marriage; from what cause I know not, since Mr. Charles is certainly all that a girl could require in a husband, however romantic might be her ideas—unless, indeed, the girl had some prior attachment. Still I used my authority to enforce a marriage which I thought so eligible in every respect, and should, no doubt, have succeeded in causing Marie to listen to the suit of her lover, and she could learn to love him afterwards; you know that was the case with me and Mrs. Wilson—my dear departed wife—she hated me when she married me, still we lived very comfortably together after all. But to my dismay I learned yesterday that there was an insurmountable obstacle to

the consummation of this union—nothing less, in fact—I may as well speak plainly, than a prior marriage on the part of your son, whose wife is still living——.”

The merchant let the hand which held the letter fall in his lap, and wiped his brow, on which the perspiration stood in bead-like drops, with his handkerchief. “Good God !” said he, “what dreadful calamity is awaiting me. Misfortune pursues me unrelentingly from every quarter. My son married—I know not to whom!—probably to some worthless creature, whom I cannot acknowledge as a daughter, or else why this secrecy on his part. My eldest daughter eloped with a music teacher; my vessel captured, and threats of exposure made, by some reckless vagabond abroad; and my right to this Jersey property likely to be disputed, and probably infamy to result from the exposure to which the investigation may subject me; and then, this reckless extravagance on the part of Charles. But he shall suffer for that. I will cut him off with a shilling. I have put up with his conduct too long.”

But, even as he uttered the last sentence, a small, still voice seemed to whisper in his ear—“What has been the cause of your son’s extravagance and licentiousness. As the twig is bent the tree is inclined. He who soweth the wind, must expect to reap the whirlwind.”

The merchant banished the unpleasant thought from his mind. “Let me finish the letter,” he said, and again he sat himself to the task :—

“ * * * Whose wife is still living ?”

“It was there I left off.

“A month or two since I took into my service a young woman, named Charlotte Herbert—a young creature of pleasing exterior and lady-like manners—and, I fear me, I did not take sufficient precaution to inquire into her character. She pleased me, however, so well; was so attentive to her duties, which were those of governess to my wards and nieces, that I thought I had found a treasure in her; and—this is between you and I—had some thoughts of asking her to accept the position of mistress of my house, vacated by the demise of the late dear departed Mrs. Wilson—I requested this Miss Herbert to exert her influence with my undutiful and wayward ward, to cause her to alter her sentiments with regard to Mr. Charles; and she promised to do so—when lo and behold!—a

pretty mess I made of it—my go-between turned round upon me with a vengeance. She was a long time closeted with Marie; and after waiting impatiently for near an hour, I thought I would go up stairs to Marie's room, to see how matters proceeded, and to add my persuasions to those of Miss Herbert. What was my astonishment and anger to find the two girls sobbing in each other's arms, and attaching epithets to my name anything but complimentary. They started up on my entrance, and on my asking Marie whether she had altered her mind with regard to your son, the minx rose from her seat, and sobbing hysterically said—

“‘I am free, sir, free from your vile machinations; this lady is Charles Mordant's wife,’ pointing to Miss Herbert. ‘Thank Heaven! I am free from his and your importunities on this score. Now, work your will towards me as you may. Death were preferable to the embraces of such a monster.’”

“You may imagine, I was utterly confounded with these heroics, especially coming, as they did, from the lips of Marie—who is generally subdued in her nature, though I believe susceptible of deep feeling, and tinged with a good deal of nonsensical, romantic sentiment.”

“I turned for an explanation to Miss Herbert. ‘What is the meaning of this?’ I asked. ‘What mummary have you been practising? Is this the way in which you exert your persuasive influence?’”

“Up she started, and I had a pair of female fiends confronting me.

“‘It is the way in which I hope all such vile conspiracies as that in which you have been engaged, will be defeated,’ she said. ‘You only know me as Miss Herbert; but, sir, I am the wife of that vile man to whom you would sell your neice, body and soul. My name is not Charlotte Herbert, but Jeanette Dixon; and under that name, in an evil hour, though thank heaven! it has been productive of one happy result, was I married to Charles Mordant.’”

“I was so overwhelmed with astonishment that I quitted the room; the two girls looked like a pair of furies, and I was really alarmed. I thought it was all nonsense; but I subsequently made inquiry, and find it is correct. Miss Herbert or rather Miss Dixon, was married to Mr. Charles at Boston, several months since, and the marriage attested by a magistrate. I ordered her out of the house, forthwith, and locked Marie up in her own room. *I will have my revenge out of her.* I am

afraid this letter will cause you considerable annoyance ; but let us hope that some means may be found, by which this marriage, into which your son has no doubt been artfully deluded, by this worthless woman, may be set aside, and in that case I may state that I have another neice and ward—Louisa—handsomer than Marie, whom Mr. Charles greatly admired when he was here; but who was at the time too young to think of matrimony, and regarding whose settlement I then had other views.

"Please let me hear from you as soon as possible ; and let me hope that this unfortunate occurrence will not interrupt the harmony and friendship that exists between us.

"Yours, very truly,

MAXIMILIAN WILSON."

Mr. Mordant heaved a deep sigh as he concluded the perusal of this letter. His feelings partook alike of grief, annoyance, and indignation. "Turned the girl out of doors," he said, at length. "What does the scoundrel mean by that. *He* turned her out of doors believing her to be *my* son's wife ! The very way to close the doors to all compromise. Jeannette Dixon ! Jeannette Dixon !" he muttered slowly and thoughtfully. "As I live, the daughter of the Philadelphia Quaker, with whom Charles had a flirtation some time back, which led to some sharp and unpleasant correspondence between me and her father. Well, I'll cast him off altogether; as he has made his bed, so he must lay in it. But, I shall go mad. When will there be an end to these troubles—"

"A gentleman wishes to see you, sir," said a servant, putting his head into the room and interrupting the merchant's soliloquy.

"Desire him to send up his name," said Mr. Mordant.

"I cannot see any visitors to-night, I will see him to-morrow."

"If you please, sir, I think I know the gentleman ; it is Captain Seymour, whom I have seen here several times."

"Captain Seymour ! Are you sure, Thomas ?"

"Yes, sir ; I can't be mistaken in him."

"Desire him to step up stairs."

"Captain Seymour !" soliloquised the merchant, as the servant went to deliver his message. "What does his unexpected visit bode ? Some fresh misfortune ; or will it prove the pivot on which my late mishaps will turn in a more favorable direction ?"

Captain Seymour entered the study.

"Seymour," said the merchant, not giving his visitor time to speak, "I am truly glad to see you, though you played me a scurvy trick in quitting the Albatross as you did, in a foreign port. But, take a seat and let me hear your news. Do you bring me any favorable intelligence of the vessel?"

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Mordant," said Seymour, "that I am the bearer of ill-tidings with regard to the Albatross; for I presume from your question, that you have not yet heard the news; indeed, it has only just been received, and was but half an hour since posted up in the Merchant's Exchange. The Albatross, with a full cargo of slaves, has been captured with all her crew, in Majumba Bay, by the British war schooner Audacious, and condemned at Sierra Leone as a lawful prize to the captors."

The intelligence fell so heavily, so suddenly, so unexpectedly upon the ears of the merchant, that he was deprived of the power of utterance. His head fell on his breast and his face grew purple as he gasped for breath.

"You are ill, sir," said Seymour, hastening towards him, and unloosing his neckcloth; "allow me to ring for assistance."

"No, no!" gasped the merchant—"No. I shall be better presently—a glass of water, if you please—the news was so sudden—but you, how did you escape? Ah! I forgot—my mind is strangely bewildered to-night—you were not on board. Captain Seymour," he added, abruptly, starting from his seat, "you are privy to this, sir; you have entered into a conspiracy against me."

"Be calm, Mr. Mordant, pray be calm," replied Seymour. "You must be aware that I am incapable of such an act as that you charge me with. Circumstances over which I had no control, compelled me to leave the vessel at Annabon; but had I been on board, I could not have prevented her capture. After all she must have paid you handsomely; paid for herself over and over again. She is gone, and her loss cannot be helped."

"And the Dolphin has gone likewise," interrupted the merchant, reseating himself, and in some degree recovering his composure.

"Well, sir, as I have said, you have made money out of them, and other ships may be built or purchased, which may still make money in the trade. It does not answer to be

daunted by misfortune. Had I succumbed to adverse influences I should long ago have given myself over to despair."

"I shall not engage in the slave trade again," said Mr. Mordant.

"I am rejoiced to hear you say so, sir," answered Seymour. "I have arrived at a similar resolve myself. I only reached New York to-day, and should have called to inform you of my determination to retire from the sea, to-night, even had I not heard of the loss of the Albatross—I must say it grieves me sorely. A true sailor, Mr. Mordant, loves his ship almost as well as he loves his mistress, and the Albatross was all that could delight the eye of a seaman. Pity that so sweet a craft should fall into the hands of the Philistines! I half think, had I been on board, I would have sunk her first, and gone to the bottom with her myself. But it is useless to regret that which is past and cannot be recalled. If you are able to listen to me I will settle matters, so far as we are concerned, and relate to you the reason of my quitting the vessel at that critical juncture."

"Go on, Captain Seymour, go on," said Mr. Mordant. "Misfortune has pressed heavily upon me of late. I do not wish to meet my family to-night. Your conversation may serve to divert my mind from dwelling upon my present difficulties."

Seymour had barely commenced to speak when the servant, Thomas, again made his appearance at the door of the study.

"A man dressed as a sailor is below, and wishes to see you," said he.

"I can see no one to-night, Thomas," replied Mr. Mordant, angrily. "What can the man want with me? Tell him to call to-morrow at my office. And do not let me be interrupted again to-night."

"I told him you could not see him to-night, sir," said the servant; "but he became boisterous, and would take no denial. He says his name is Tolcroft, and that he was chief mate of the Albatross."

"Tolcroft! chief mate of the Albatross!" exclaimed Mr. Mordant, looking suspiciously at Seymour.

"Tolcroft!" said Seymour. "What d—l's wind could have blown him here? I thought he had been captured with the vessel at Majumba."

The servant stared in astonishment at them both.

"You knew that this man was here?" said Mr. Mordant, addressing Seymour.

"No, indeed, I did not; I am as much surprised as yourself. I thought he had been captured with the vessel."

Boisterous exclamations were heard in the passage, interrupted with sundry oaths, and presently a heavy footstep was heard ascending the stairs.

"Tell the man to come up, Thomas," said Mr. Mordant, making a virtue of necessity, and he had scarcely spoken the words before Tolcroft entered the room, attired in coarse, tarry, seaman's clothing, and deeply intoxicated.

He was known to the merchant, who, eyeing him sternly, demanded what had brought him there in that condition.

"My lower timbers, I guess, master," rejoined the drunken seaman; "but I've had a mortal foul wind and heavy weather. It was tack ship all the way, and two or three times I came near foundering; but I've got into harbor at last, and now, as I've furled my sails, and am safe in port, I'll provision the hold, by your leave. I see you've got some liquor on the table, and my throat's as dry as a ship's rigging, after running the Trades down."

Tolcroft had not seen Seymour, who had purposely hitched his chair back to avoid observation.

Mr. Mordant was speechless with astonishment at the man's insolent behavior, and Tolcroft coolly filled a tumbler with wine and drank it off at a draught.

"What is your business with me?" said the merchant, at length, partially recovering himself.

"Business—business enough. The Albatross has gone to the d—l and Davy Jones, and I'm stranded on a lee shore; who should I come to but to you to tow me off again; I'm hard up; not a shot left in the locker, and you must come down handsomely, or else by —— it'll be the worse for you."

"Sirrah!" exclaimed Mr. Mordant, "what do you mean by this insolence? Begone, or I'll have you turned out of doors."

"I objects to that, master," said the drunken seaman; "out of here I shan't budge a foot till you shell out enough to set me going on a spree, and I shall come for more to-morrow, and more after that again and again. You can't gammon old Tolcroft."

Mr. Mordant rang the bell, and the servant appeared.

"Thomas, go immediately and call a policeman," said he.

"Not so fast," said Tolcroft, stepping towards the door at

which the servant was standing, and causing that functionary to make a precipitate retreat, under the impression that the sailor was about to hurl him down stairs. He closed and locked the door. "Now, Mr. Mordant," said he; but at that moment his eye fell on Seymour, who had until now been concealed by a screen. He started back with mingled astonishment and dismay depicted in his countenance. The old habit of discipline obtained the mastery over him, and assuming that ludicrous attempt to appear sober, peculiar to a drunken man, when he wishes to disguise his condition, he balanced himself by placing one hand on the table, and with the other pulled his forelock, and scraping his foot backwards, made an awkward, salt-water salute to his old commander.

"How do I see you in this disgraceful condition, Tolcroft?" said Seymour, sternly; "and what do you do here, conducting yourself in this outrageous manner?"

"Cap'n—Cap'n Seymour, I'm hard up," said the seaman; "and, axing yer pardon, I thowt as Mr. Mordant, who owned the ship in which all I had was taken from me, ought to do somethin' to help a poor fellow out of his trouble."

"And this is the way you choose to seek for relief, is it, sirrah?" continued Seymour. "You come with violence and threats—dare to come here in such a beastly state of drunkenness that you are hardly able to stand."

"Sober—sober—as a judge, Cap'n," stammered the *ci-devant* mate of the Albatross, proving his assertion by stumbling backwards and falling headlong to the floor.

"The policeman is here, sir," said the servant, putting his head in at the door, and looking warily round, ready to start back at the least show of pugnacity on the part of the sailor.

Tolcroft lay rolling about the floor, muttering to himself, and vainly endeavoring to regain his feet.

"Allow me to settle this matter to-night, Mr. Mordant," said Seymour; "the fellow will do as I tell him." Then, stepping out, he made some explanation to the policeman, and bringing him into the room, assisted him to raise the drunken sailor.

"Tolcroft," he said, when they had with difficulty enabled him to regain an upright posture, "you will go with this gentleman, and he will provide you with a comfortable night's lodging, and to-morrow you will come to me at the Astor House. You will direct him to do this in the morning," continued he, addressing the officer.

"I will, sir," said the policeman.

"Now, Tolcroft, you hear what I say; go away quietly with this gentleman, and in the morning I will see what I can do for you."

"Any—thing t—t—t' oblige you, captain," stammered the mate; "st—st—steady as—the main truck. But as for this f—f—fellow," shaking his fist at the merchant, "when I c—c—catch him aboard th'—th' Albatross, I'll p—p—punch his head."

He was led, meek as a lamb, out of the room by the officer, and when they were gone Seymour said—

"I see you are disconcerted to-night, Mr. Mordant, and I will intrude upon you no longer. I am stopping at the Astor House; but, with your leave, I will call to-morrow and renew my acquaintance with the ladies. I trust that stormy as things may look at present, all will yet go well." So saying he wished the merchant good night, and left the house.

Mr. Mordant sat for some time after his strangely unexpected visitors had departed, absorbed in rêverie of, to judge from the expression of his countenance, no pleasing character. "Good God!" said he, at length, as he rose from his seat and prepared to retire, "what will be the upshot of all this?"

Seymour reached the hotel and went to his room. It was growing late, and he was fatigued; but before he prepared to retire to rest, he sat down by the table in his bed-room, and leaning his head on his hands, fell into a profound reverie. His thoughts were far distant—across the blue water, amongst the lovely islands of the Grecian sea. "Where is Zuleika now?" he murmured. "What is she doing at this moment? Is she thinking of me, poor child, as fondly as I am of her? I cannot doubt it. Am I a father? Perhaps, ere this, Zuleika has borne me a child. Oh, what would I not give now to know that she were well—to see her for one moment. Well, well; a very short time will enable me to settle all my affairs in this country, and then for Zuleika and love! I will quit her no more. Together, in some secluded valley, in Switzerland, perhaps, we will find a home, and, I trust, lasting happiness. It has been a romantic dream—this fancy of mine—to endeavor to educate a wife from girlhood upwards, in seclusion—to keep her from all contact with the cold and heartless world. But when I shall be always with her, my Zuleika shall go more into society—she shall be admired as she deserves to be. I find that the social instinct of man's nature will not

allow him to be happy in solitude ; but Zuleika has borne this for me, and lives only in the light of my love. So far my scheme has succeeded. Poor child ! I wonder if her babe is a boy or a girl, and whether it resembles her. If it does I shall be jealous, especially if it be a girl. I could not bear to see a second Zuleika, rivalling her mother's charms. Perhaps—but no, I will not allow myself to think of that. She is young and healthful, and must be thriving still.

“How hollow seem the pleasures and vanities of the world, when I think of Zuleika ! I thought once, and I had reason to think so, that all mankind, and womankind, too, were deceitful and wicked, and I swore enmity against my race. But I think differently now, and perhaps I may become reconciled to mankind, when I live constantly with her.” He raised his head, and leaning upon his elbow, commenced building *Chateaux d’Espagne*, and so sat in a half-waking dream for hours, until some noise in the street aroused him. The gray light of dawn was stealing into his room, and the candles were expiring in their sockets. He started up, and smiling at his abstraction, he hastily threw off his clothes, and getting into bed, was soon asleep, and dreaming of home, and his mother, and his boyish days, and his past career of lawlessness and crime. Alternate lights and shadows passed over his mental vision, as thus he lay sleeping until a late hour in the morning ; but there was one glorious image mixed with all, whose presence diffused a halo over the darkest shadows, and gave additional refulgence to the brightest fancies of his dreams. It was the image of Zuleika, now flitting before him as the little blue-eyed girl, gazing curiously and timidly around her in the slave market at Constantinople ; now as the young, newly-wedded bride, upon whose lips he pressed the *husband’s* first kiss of love, on the island of Annabon ; now again, as last he had seen her, when, with tearful eyes, she clung to him as he embraced her and bade her farewell, ere he stepped into the boat that was to bear him to the felucca ; and now—but this last image was dim and indistinct, and some envious shadow seemed to obscure his vision, as he would have prolonged his gaze upon this, the fairest picture of all—he saw her, the mother of a lovely babe, blushing with delight and love, and proud in her young matronhood, flying to meet him, bearing the infant in her arms, as once again his boat’s prow touched the shore, and he stepped lightly and gaily upon the level strand of Zuleika’s Isle.

CHAPTER XXX.

Frank Martin Returns Home, and has an Interview with Seymour, during which some Strange Revelations are made.

"WHY Frank, I should scarcely have recognized you, had I met you in the streets," said William Martin, after the first joyful greetings had passed between him and his brother—in Mr. Ogilvie's office. "Why, how brown you are, almost as dark as an Indian, and how stout you have grown, and tall too; why you are bigger every way than I am—well, what news do you bring? Oh, Frank, you were a sad dog not to write to us after you sailed from New York with Captain Seymour. You surely have never thought of the anxiety that your silence has occasioned to mother and to all of us; but what wind has blown you here?"

"A good easterly wind, which in spite of its aguish tendency is sometimes of service," replied Frank; "but I came home in a merchant ship from Sierra Leone, having been invalided from the United States ship G——, on board which I have been serving for some months past—and which will arrive home herself soon, for she was to sail shortly after I left, for Norfolk. Yellow Jack got a hard gripe of me, and the captain of the G——, who is as good a fellow as ever trod a ship's deck—shipped me off only a week or two before-hand for fear that I should suffer a relapse."

"Then you have been employed in the national service, Frank?" said William Martin. "How was that? we had no information of it."

"Neither did I," replied Frank, "I assure you I went on board a man-of-war, *sans ceremonie*, having been picked up at sea with just the toggery I happened to have on—little enough in all conscience."

"How? were you wrecked?" asked William.

"Wrecked! nay—a d—lish sight worse—burnt out; a fate bad enough to befall a poor fellow on land; but still worse at sea, where there are no back doors to escape from."

"Then Captain Seymour's ship—what was her name? she belonged, if I recollect aright, to a merchant in New York named Mordant—has gone to the bottom. We should have

been sadly distressed had we heard of the accident. Strange! we did not hear one word of it."

"The Albatross, the ship you speak of, may have gone to the bottom, or she may still be pursuing her unhallowed trade above water, for aught I know," said Frank. "I left her some time before the accident of which I speak."

"You speak in enigmas, Frank. You must have had as many adventures since you left the old homestead at Camden, as that Robinson Crusoe, whose history you were so fond of reading when a boy. Come, let's hear your story, in regular order, from beginning to end."

Frank commenced the narrative from the day he was sent on board the Albatross, continuing it to the hour of his reaching Boston, on his return from the coast. As the reader is acquainted with the material of the narrative, we shall not repeat it; but it proved very interesting to William Martin, whose quiet profession, as a lawyer's clerk, had occasioned him to lead a life of quiet monotony, far removed from the excitement and the perils which befall those whose vocation leads them forth to do business on the "vasty deep."

"I declare, Frank, you have had an abundance of adventures since last we met," said William Martin, when his brother had concluded his narrative; "but the thought has just flashed through my mind—Do you know anything of the antecedents of this Captain Seymour, with whom you sailed from New York, and who fired upon you when endeavoring to effect your escape from the Albatross?"

"No. He is a strange customer altogether—an educated man, gentlemanly in appearance, and very handsome; but the very d—l when his passions are aroused; but why do you ask?"

"Simply because a matter has turned up possessing considerable interest to our family, which I will recount to you by-and-by, and Mr. Ogilvie mentioned the name of Seymour as being connected with it; but there may be a hundred families of that name, to be sure."

"No time like the present," exclaimed Frank. "I have told you my story, now tell me yours. You say it treats of matters interesting to our family—I should like to hear it."

William Martin related to his brother all that he knew himself with regard to the circumstances detailed by Mr. Deane. In the course of which narration, he alluded to the ring worn by Jessica Deane, which had attracted the notice of Mrs. Donaldson.

"What sort of a ring was that of which you speak?" interrupted Frank. "Describe it again, will you?"

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, when his brother had obeyed him, "that's an exact description of the ring that Charlotte Herbert wore on her finger, and which I took from her hand after she was in the water. I thought she had perished from cold and exposure; and, although I scarcely hoped to be saved myself, yet I thought the ring might be a valuable memento to her family—should my life be preserved. I gave it back to her, a day or two after we got on board the G——: it had the letter 'J' engraved on the inside, and was altogether the very counterpart of the ring you have described."

"There is a string of mysteries depending upon rings of that kind, I think," said William Martin—"the coincidences, to say the least, are very remarkable."

Mr. Ogilvie called William from the inner office, and he left his brother alone for a few moments. Frank took up one of the New York morning papers which lay upon the table, and glanced his eyes carelessly over the columns. Presently his attention appeared to be deeply interested in a paragraph, and he was still reading when his brother re-entered.

"What so deeply absorbs your attention in that newspaper, Frank?" asked William.

"It's a fortunate thing I left the Albatross," answered Frank, "I see by this paper that she has been captured off the coast of Africa, with a full cargo of slaves on board, and carried as a prize into Sierra Leone, where she has been condemned. She arrived there, I see by the date, only the day after I sailed; the news has arrived soon—but the old tub that I came home in sailed like a dung barge."

"Captain Seymour will find himself in an awkward predicament?" said William.

"Why, no, if he had been captured, I think his name would have been mentioned. To be sure, he might have been killed in the skirmish, if, as I suppose, a skirmish took place; but I rather think he must have made his escape, for I see, in the list of arrivals at the hotels the name of Captain Seymour, at the Astor House."

"He ought to be arrested," said William.

"I don't see," replied his brother, "that that would serve any purpose. No cognizance could be taken relative the capture of the Albatross in the United States."

"No, but I mean for the attempt made to take your life."

"Oh, as for that, I doubt if I could make out a case against him sufficiently strong to bring him to account. You know I have no witnesses. There would be simply my own testimony. However, I must say I should like to confront him. I shall pass through New York on my way home, for I wish to see Mr. Mordant, and I shall certainly endeavor to see this Captain Seymour also, that is, if I find he is the person I suspect him to be."

"I wish you would let me introduce you to Mr. Ogilvie, Frank," said William. "He probably would like to see you relative to this affair of ours he has on hand."

"With all my heart," replied Frank, and the two brothers entered together into Mr. Ogilvie's private office.

The lawyer welcomed the brother of his favorite clerk, and listened with interest to his narrative, which William, at the instance of Mr. Ogilvie, insisted upon his repeating.

"I suppose you are anxious to see your mother and sister, after so long an absence," said he, "but I approve of your resolve to call upon Mr. Mordant, whose conduct towards you has been, to say the least, highly reprehensible, and while you are in New York, certainly endeavor to discover whether the Captain Seymour mentioned as having arrived at the Astor House be really your old commander."

Mr. Ogilvie invited the young sailor to dine with him; but the train was to leave in an hour, and wishing his brother and newly-found friend farewell, Frank got on board the cars, and was soon whirling away at the rate of thirty miles an hour towards New York.

Mr. Mordant was seated in his office on the morning of the second day after his interview with Seymour, when he was informed that a young man had called and wished to see him.

"Show him in," said the merchant, and Frank Martin was shown into the room.

"What is your business with me young man?" asked Mr. Mordant, who was not personally acquainted with the youth. "My name is Martin, sir," replied Frank.

"I was apprenticed to you some three years since, and last sailed in your service under Captain Seymour of the *Albatross*."

Mr. Mordant, to use a seaman's expression, was taken "all aback" at this announcement. It seemed as if difficulties were increasing upon him to such a degree as perfectly to overwhelm him. He imagined that the youth had made his escape after

the capture of the slaver, and like Tolcroft, had now called upon him for the purpose of demanding hush money, and he replied—

“ I am sorry for the mishap which has befallen that ill-fated vessel, my lad, and if you are in need of assistance, I shall be glad to help you. I have other ships, in one of which I will procure you a berth; meanwhile here is some money for your present necessities,” taking a roll of notes from his pocket.

“ I do not need assistance, sir, and I was not on board the Albatross at the time she was seized by the cruiser—I escaped from her in the Bay of Aracati, after having been fired upon by Captain Seymour and his officers—because I no longer wished to remain on board a vessel engaged in a disreputable and illegal traffic. I have called upon you to demand my release from the indentures which bind me to serve you for five years. Agree to do that and I shall trouble you no further. I wish, however, to know whether the Captain Seymour, who, I perceive from the papers, is now stopping at the Astor House in this city, is the Captain Seymour who formerly commanded the Albatross ?”

“ He is—he is, young man,” replied the merchant, hurriedly, for he was so excited that he scarcely knew what he was saying. “ And—what else did you say ? Ah ! your indentures. Yes, I will cancel your indentures—and if at any time you should ——”

“ Write me a document signifying that you have cancelled my indentures, and give them up to me,” said Frank, interrupting the merchant, “ and I will neither ask nor accept any further favors from you, Mr. Mordant.”

The merchant was an old and wealthy man, an influential member of society ; one whom, to be acquainted with, was considered to stamp the respectability of the happy possessor of that acquaintanceship. Frank Martin was a mere youth—a sailor boy—who had to fight the battle of life unaided, and to win his way upwards step by step by his own exertions ; but the moral courage bestowed by conscious innocence and the cowardice of conscious guilt were clearly demonstrated in the course of this brief interview ;—the gray-haired merchant quailed before the calm, clear blue eye of the youthful sailor, and without saying another word, he withdrew from a desk the indenture spoken of, cancelled it, and handed it to Frank. Then, as the youth was about to leave the office, he would have renewed his offers of assistance—

“ I am sorry,” he said, “ that matters have happened thus

unfortunately. I hope, young man, you will have the discretion to keep your own counsel, and I shall ——”

“You need fear nothing from me, sir,” replied Frank, again interrupting the merchant. “I am not yet fallen so low as to become an informer.”

Without deigning to await the merchant's response, he turned on his heel and quitted the office, carelessly crumpling the cancelled indenture in his hand, and thrusting it in his pocket.

When he had left, Mr. Mordant gave way to a reverie, in which thoughts of the most painful and distracting nature intruded themselves. He felt truly repentant of the course he had for several years pursued, and by the means of which he had very considerably increased his wealth; but whether the repentance was real, or whether it was only that which sooner or later always overtakes the doer of evil, and is oftener caused by regret at the failure of his schemes, and by the dread of that retribution which he fears awaits him, than by remorse for his past conduct, we leave to the reader who has been afforded an insight into the principles which actuated the merchant in his undertakings and speculations, to decide.

Frank Martin resolved to call upon Captain Seymour that evening; meanwhile he went home to his lodgings, where he found a letter awaiting him from his brother, acquainting him of the arrival of Mr. Deane in New York—which intelligence had been received shortly after he had left Boston, and requesting him to call upon that gentleman, who had taken rooms at the same hotel with Seymour.

“I don't know this Mr. Deane,” said Frank to himself, when he read the letter; “but, as it will be all in my way when I call at the Astor House to-night, I suppose I must make myself known to him. I wonder if Jessica, the young lady William thinks so much of, is with him. If I thought she were, I should like to see her. Yes, I'll call on Mr. Deane before I see Captain Seymour to-night.”

Having arrayed himself in his best, in the hope that Jessica Deane had accompanied her father to New York, and naturally wishing to make as favorable an impression as possible in the eyes of his brother's sweetheart, Frank presented himself at seven o'clock at the door of the apartments occupied by Mr. Deane in the hotel. He was kindly welcomed for his brother's sake, and as he had anticipated, Jessica Deane had accompanied her father to the city.

"My daughter, Mr. Martin," said Mr. Deane, presenting the young seaman to the beautiful girl. "You, have no doubt, heard William speak of her. You must be friends with William Martin's brother, Jessie," (addressing his daughter); and leading her to the youth, he placed the young lady's hand in that of Frank.

Jessica blushed and smiled, and said she should always be happy to enrol in her list of friends any relative of William Martin; and Frank, as he felt the soft, electric touch, and saw the kindling blush that suffused her cheek, and marked her blue eyes, downcast with modesty, and yet beaming with delight, half envied his brother's good fortune, and wondered if he, rude sailor as he was, would ever meet with such a neat, tidy, little consort—willing to journey side by side with *him* across the stormy ocean of life.

"I presume your brother has informed you, Mr. Martin, of the interesting circumstances that have lately transpired relative to your family and Mrs. Donaldson?" said Mr. Deane, after some preliminary conversation had taken place.

"He has, sir," replied Frank, "and I need scarcely say that I hope matters will turn out favorably for us; but, I cannot stay long to-night. I will see you again before I start for Camden. I have to call upon a gentleman who is putting up at this hotel—one Captain Seymour, under whose command I once sailed."

"Captain Seymour—Seymour!" said Mr. Deane, "there is a person of that name connected with this affair between Mrs. Donaldson and your family. He will be the residuary legatee in case the old lady should die without making a will. However, there are, of course, *many* persons of that name. Still, I should like to see this Captain Seymour." ♦

"You can easily do that, sir; though, perhaps, it would not be so easy a matter to assure yourself of his identity with the person in question. I would ask you to step up to his room with me, but it is better that I should first see him alone."

Wishing Mr. Deane and his daughter good night, Frank, having procured the direction and the number of the apartment, from a waiter, proceeded to Captain Seymour's room. He knocked at the door, and shortly he heard the well-known voice of his late commander, utter the words—

"Come in."

Frank entered the room. Seymour was seated at the table, writing; and before him, on the table, lay an open locket,

containing the portrait of Zuleika ; he raised his head as the young man entered, and looked at him inquiringly, not immediately recognizing him.

"Do you not know me, Captain Seymour?" said Frank, "my name is Martin—Frank Martin. I sailed with you on board the Albatross."

"And took French leave of me, in Aracati Bay, boy," exclaimed Seymour, rising from his seat and frankly extending his hand to the youth, "Well, I would have caught you if I could ; but you managed to get the better of me. It was as well. You have heard, I presume, that the Albatross has been captured off the coast of Africa. It has been a bad business throughout ; and now, I have resolved to abandon it for ever. Let by-gones be by-gones, boy. Come, sit you down and join me in a bottle of wine ; and we'll chat of old times. Perhaps, I did not use you well as regards that last little affair ; but my passions were uppermost and I scarcely knew what I did. "Come, sit down," he repeated, "the sight of an old shipmate refreshes me. Tolcroft is here ; but the beast is half crazy with delirium tremens, and I have had to send him to the hospital."

The young sailor was utterly thrown off his guard by the frank, open manner of his former captain. He had entered the room expecting to find Seymour alarmed at seeing him ; and had anticipated angry words and recriminations on both sides ; but the captain was confident in his own power to sway men to his will, and in this instance he had not exerted it in vain. Frank took the extended hand, accepted Seymour's invitation, and in the course of a quarter of an hour, the two sailors, different as were their relative positions and circumstances, were chatting merrily over the incidents of former days, and calling up old reminiscences with all the gusto of those aged veterans who are so fond of sailing their voyages and fighting their battles over again, in the snug shelter of the chimney corner.

"And what do you intend doing with yourself now?" asked Seymour, after a pause in the conversation.

"I have not thought of anything yet. I shall go to sea again, I suppose ; but not in one of Mr. Mordant's ships. I have had enough of them. Meanwhile, I am going home to see my mother and sister. By-the-by," he continued, carelessly, for the wine he had drunk had made him foolishly communicative, "a streak of good fortune, as it may turn out, has

befallen us since I have been absent from home. An old lady—an Englishwoman, I fancy—has discovered that my mother is a relation of hers, and that my sister is her namesake, and she is going to leave Sarah her property. Her name is Donaldson. My mother's name was Donaldson before——”

“Donaldson! an Englishwoman!” exclaimed Seymour. “Your mother's name was Donaldson before she was married, Frank? What part of England did she come from?”

“I think I have heard her say from Somersetshire,” replied Frank.

“The Donaldsons of Somersetshire! Good heavens! it must be the same family. Did you ever hear your mother mention the name of Seymour?”

“Not that I know of,” said Frank; “but that reminds me—Mr. Deane, the lawyer, who is investigating this matter, has said something about a person of the name of Seymour, who is concerned in the matter. That is, who will be the heir to the old lady's property provided she dies without making a will (which I pray to God she won't do) or something of that sort. Mr. Deane and I were talking about it just now.”

“Talking about it just now, boy? Is Mr. Deane here?”

“He occupies a room below, and when I mentioned your name he said he should like to see you.”

“I will go and see him at once—nay, stay—go you to him, Frank, and make Captain Seymour's compliments and ask Mr. Deane if he can make it convenient to come up to my room—with you, Frank, mind, with you.”

“What's in the wind now?” thought Frank, as he proceeded to deliver the message. “Wonders will never cease.”

In the course of a few minutes the young man returned with Mr. Deane, to whom he introduced Capt. Seymour.

“I have requested the favor of your company, sir,” said Seymour, entering at once into the subject, “to ask you some questions relative to the business you have, I understand, on hand, in which my young friend here is interested. He says that you have spoken of a person named Seymour, in connection with one Mrs. Donaldson, who is, or professes to be, a relative of this youngman's mother. Do you know the degree of relationship, if any, that exists between this Mr. Seymour and Mrs. Donaldson?”

“I do not know that I am justified in stating all that Mrs. Donaldson has related to me in confidence,” replied Mr. Deane, “but I presume, from your asking the question, that you ima-

gine yourself to be the person alluded to under the name of Seymour. I will state that Colonel, the Hon. Alfred Seymour, I believe, some time about the commencement of the present century—I do not recollect the exact date—married a Miss Mary Donaldson, the eldest daughter of one James Donaldson, of Rose Abbey, in the County of Somerset, England—I am sorry to add, that from all I can learn, the colonel sadly neglected the lady, who died of a broken heart, through her husband's conduct, leaving issue by the colonel, one son named Alfred, who was brought by his father, while still a lad, to America. He married, when he arrived at man's estate, a young French lady, then residing with her guardian in Louisiana, and died a few years after his marriage, leaving his widow with one only child. What became of this boy, whether he be still living or not, I cannot say; but it is this son of Alfred Seymour to whom Mrs. Donaldson alludes. It was her eldest sister who married Colonel Seymour."

"What relationship does Mrs. Donaldson bear to Mrs. Martin, the mother of our young friend here? Pardon me for being so curious, but I am singularly interested in this matter."

"Mrs. Martin is the niece of Mrs. Sarah Donaldson, and, I believe, her only living relative, except this grand-nephew, Seymour, now alive. On the death of Mr Donaldson, of Rose Abbey, he bequeathed his property to his second daughter, Sarah, the elder daughter, Mary, having died before her father, who refused to leave a single shilling to his graceless son-in-law, who, by the way, from all I can learn, did not need the money, being both wealthy and highly connected. Mrs. Donaldson wishes to leave her fortune to her niece; but failing to establish this claim, this young man, Seymour, should he ever turn up, would be the heir."

"Frank, my lad," said Seymour, taking the astonished youth by the hand, and shaking it heartily, "I grant it is a sort of Scotch relationship, although it does not go back quite to the thirty-second degree. But as your great aunt and my great aunt are both one and the same person—viz., this Mrs. Sarah Donaldson this gentleman speaks of—for I am the grandson of Colonel Alfred Seymour—we must be cousins in some sort of way, boy. I don't say that you have any reason to feel proud of your newly-discovered relative"—and he laughed a hollow laugh—"but at all events, if I can furnish a link in the chain of identity, I will do so with pleasure. It's not often I have the chance to do good service, and still seldomer that I feel

inclined"—and he again laughed that short, hollow laugh—"but I owe you a good turn, as a set-off against a past offence, and you shall have the benefit of it. As to my being heir to the property, that's all moonshine. I have money enough, if that will bring peace and happiness; besides, did not old Mr. Donaldson cut off his son-in-law, my graceless grand-daddy, with a shilling? But come, Frank, you have a brother and a sister and a mother living; they are all relatives of mine. I must see them. And Mr. Deane," addressing the lawyer, "I must have the pleasure of an introduction, through you, to this venerable old grand-aunt of mine, of whom you speak."

Frank was so amazed at what he had heard—his interview with Seymour had been productive of fruit so entirely different from what he had anticipated—that he could not reply; but Mr. Deane, who was delighted at the turn matters had taken, shook Captain Seymour by the hand, and asked him to dine with him on the following day.

"And, my dear sir," he added, "if you think of going to Camden with Master Frank, and visiting your newly-discovered relatives, we will travel all together as far as Augusta, where I will introduce you to Mrs. Donaldson, who, perhaps, may be induced to accompany you to Camden, when she finds that her object is so satisfactorily attained. I need not say that I am gratified at the turn matters have taken. The main cause of my visiting New York was to institute inquiries with regard to this business, and I care not how soon I return home."

Seymour accepted the invitation, adding, "I do feel inclined to visit Camden, but my visit must of necessity be short; for as soon as I have satisfactorily arranged certain business I have on hand, I am going to Europe, whence, in all probability, I may never return. Still, I will see these relatives of mine before I go."

On the following day Seymour and Frank dined in Mr. Deane's room, and the former was introduced to Jessica. During the progress of the meal, his attention seemed to be strangely fixed upon the young lady, so much so, indeed, that he replied in quite an absent manner to various remarks that fell from the lips of her father. At length he could no longer control his curiosity.

"I am afraid I shall appear rude," he said; "but may I ask you, Miss Deane, to allow me to examine that ring you wear on your finger. I have seen but one that resembled it; and there are singular circumstances connected with its history."

The young lady drew the ring from her finger, and placed it in Seymour's hand. He examined it closely, and, apparently in a careless manner, glanced at the inside. There was the letter J engraved in the old Roman character. Without making any remark, he returned it to the young lady; but various strange thoughts passed through his mind. This little episode was not observed by Mr. Deane nor by Frank, who were both deeply engaged in conversation at the time, or possibly some explanation might have been vouchsafed to Seymour. As it was, his fancy was left to its own imaginings.

The next day the party set out for Augusta, and Seymour was introduced to Mrs. Donaldson; and, as Mr. Deane had anticipated, the lady gladly consented to join Seymour and Frank in their anticipated journey to Camden.

"It is singular about that ring," thought Seymour, as he was undressing himself that night in his chamber in Mr. Deane's house at Augusta. "I must see Mrs. Miller on my return to New York, and ascertain whether she has heard any thing of poor Jane. I could swear that the ring Miss Jessica Deane wears is the one I presented to Jane Miller. Let me see—this is Wednesday—to-morrow night I shall be at Camden. I will remain there till Saturday, and be back in New York by Tuesday or Wednesday next, at the latest. By the middle of the ensuing week I can arrange all my affairs—and then for the East and my Zuleika."

CHAPTER XXXI.

Marca and Zoe relate the Events which occurred during their long Separation from each other—Seymour's Return to Zuleika's Isle.

RETURN we to the Ægean Sea and Zuleika's Isle. Two weary months have passed away since the events occurred which we have recorded in a former chapter relative to the birth of Zuleika's child. Two weary months—and yet not altogether weary, for every day brought nearer the long-hoped-for reunion of Zuleika and her husband—this time all the more anxiously, eagerly longed for, because of the desire the young mother possessed to present to her husband the first-born pledge of their mutual love; not altogether weary, although each day and each hour was counted; for a novel occupation

now engrossed Zuleika's formerly idle moments, and divided her thoughts, and hopes, and fears. She had a babe on whom to bestow the words of affection that would otherwise have been breathed to the heedless winds, and the love and attendance that babe required at her hands made the hours pass away more swiftly than if, as formerly, her books and her music had been her sole amusements. Still, although, day by day, the hours sped rapidly enough away, the time that had passed by seemed long, and long it seemed to look forward, even beyond the short space which must yet elapse ere she could hope that every hour would bring tidings of the absent one.

Zuleika had been brought very low during her confinement, and the anxiety she had felt had pressed severely upon her, and aided in retarding her recovery. She was not really ill, and yet the bloom had fled from her cheeks, and the roundness had faded from her form. Still she looked all the more lovely; she had lost nothing of her native grace, her womanly beauty, but she had added to her charms an etherealness, a spirituality, which made her appear too pure, too fair, too much of an angel, to linger long upon earth. And Jane Miller, as she gazed upon her fragile form, and watched the emotions of her pallid, speaking countenance, half feared that she was not long to remain an inhabitant of this world; and while she feared, could not dispossess herself of the belief that even like her namesake—Selim's betrothed bride—it were well if she died ere her trust in Seymour's honor and truth were broken—ere, perchance, her own purity and innocence were lost. She then could have whispered—

—————"Peace to her early grave,
Ah! happy! but of life to lose the worst.

* * * * *

Thrice happy! ne'er to feel nor fear the force
Of absence, shame, pride, hate, revenge, remorse!
And, oh! that pang, where more than madness lies,
The worm that will not sleep and never dies,
Thought of the gloomy day, and ghastly night
That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes the light."

And still she hoped that fate might yet have a happy earthly future in store for her—that she might recover her wonted health and elasticity of spirit, when once Seymour returned, and the corroding anxiety that was wearing her away was removed, and she hoped that Seymour himself might reform, and, resolving never again to leave his lovely bride, might

spend the latter portion of his life in a manner better calculated to win him peace, and content, and happiness, than that which had characterized his earlier career. And others, too, looked with eyes of love and pity upon the gentle Zuleika; the Greek maidens, as they passed by, would cease their light, joyous songs; and advancing near to her, as she sat on a rustic seat that had been constructed upon the beach, with the baby in her lap, gazing thoughtfully upon the sea, far, far into the distance, as though she sought to pierce the horizon and descry her husband's bark, long ere it drew near the shore, would with gentle, pitying smiles, admire the infant's beauty, and bid the fair youthful mother be of good cheer, for the wind was fair, and perhaps her lord would arrive on the morrow, and then they would join their own favored lovers, and whisper to them their hopes and fears. It was a great incentive to love-making amongst the youths and maidens of Zuleika's Isle, this sympathy that all felt, the aged as well as the young, towards its fair and gentle mistress. All but two: those two were Marca and Zoe. They did not openly dare to wish her ill—they did not even secretly seek to do her harm; yet any one who scanned the expression of their features when they gazed upon the young mother and her infant, would readily have discerned the secret hatred they bore towards them both.

Zoe had departed from the island shortly after the conversation had taken place between her and Marca, on the morning of the baby's birth. The reader will recollect that on that occasion they had been interrupted in their conversation on the sea-shore by a party of pleasure-seekers that chance had brought near the beach. They had separated just as Zoe had promised to relate her son's history, and had expressed a desire to hear that of Marca during the long period they had been separated. Zoe had only returned a few hours, when she and her mother again met, on the very spot where they had stood on the occasion of the conversation already recorded.

"How fares Vincenzo's daughter and child?" asked Zoe of the aged sibyl, after they had met and exchanged a few words of greeting.

"The flower fades, and the bud will be blighted ere the blossom unfolds," replied Marca.

"You have tended her in her sickness?" replied Zoe, inquiringly, and casting a glance of strange meaning towards her mother.

"No; I know what you would infer, Zoe," answered Marca;

"but no; I have sought to do no evil to either, but the withering curse that I bestowed upon the betrayer and murderer of my husband will light upon all his descendants, until every one in whose veins runs the blood of Vincenzo shall have perished. I would have spared this child; but the decree has gone forth—I cannot stay the operations of the curse I have evoked."

"Say rather," sneered Zoe, "that the powers of heaven and hell have decreed vengeance on the hated despoiler—even to his children's children. Your feeble curse can do little harm, mother. I take braver and surer means to work out my vengeance. How long would it have taken to work out the death of Leila—the destruction of Vincenzo—if your foolish curse had been the only vengeance employed?"

Marca was about to retort angrily, for she was vain of the credit she had established of possessing the power of dispensing evil to all who fell under her ban; but her reply was cut short by Zoe, who said, curtly—

"It is enough, mother; it is enough. Make the simple islanders believe in and dread your power as long as you may; but speak not of it to me. Listen, and I will relate to you my son's history. *He* yet lives to aid *me* in my plans of vengeance against his hated father's race.

"Vincenzo, when first he took me, against my will, to be the favorite bride and mistress of his harem—lavished freely upon me the wealth that he had hoarded during his successful forays upon the Grecian and Turkish coasts, and I, silly child that I was, almost learned to love him, though I always felt a fear creep over me when I was summoned to his apartment—and fear is a sad foe to love. Two years after I left my native mountains, I bore Vincenzo a son, whom he called Abdallah, and whom I fondly hoped would live to succeed his father as prince and chieftain of these isles, and lord of the countless galleys which in former days swept these seas, and claimed tribute from every mariner who was bold enough to plow their waters with his keel. But it was a vain and foolish dream that of mine. Vincenzo planned a desperate attack upon Larissa, where Ismael Pasha had collected immense treasure. He succeeded, and his galleys returned laden with spoil; and amongst that spoil was a young Circassian, whom Ismael had but a short time before purchased of a mountain chief, who said she was his child. Her beauty fired the heart of Vincenzo; he gave himself up to pleasure, and allowed the rich treasure

he had captured to be shared amongst his followers, reserving only to himself that which he prized beyond all, the fair Leila—the mother of Bedita.

“From that day I was reduced from the mistress of Vincenzo’s harem—from the ‘light of his life,’ as he was accustomed to style me, to the veriest slave that ever pandered to the vile whims of a renegade pirate chief. My boy was discarded—disowned. The love Vincenzo had appeared to bear toward me was turned to hatred. I know not whether Leila exerted her influence to cause this. I do not think she did. She was a mere dainty toy—too insipid either to love or to hate. But it was through her that this evil befel me, and I swore revenge upon her. How I succeeded you already know.

“But with regard to my son Abdallah, I breathed words of vengeance into his young ear. I taught him to hate his father; and as he grew up, the sweetest music to my ears was his expressions of demoniac vengeance. A young Frank, one from the far distant land of the West, came to our shores; he was no other than the present husband of Zuleika. I knew him as the youth who purchased Bedita of me in the market place at Stamboul. He joined the pirate horde of which Abdallah was the leader. He was brave to rashness. I told my son that he had purchased Bedita, and, as I had heard, intended to make her his bride. To make my vengeance complete, I resolved that the betrothed husband of the daughter should take the life of the father. Enough: during an attack led by Abdallah upon the stronghold of Vincenzo, on the Island of Scio, he fell—cleft to the shoulder by the sabre of the Frank pirate. Bedita’s husband has his hands dyed with the blood of her father!

“I lost sight of the Frank for many years—but at last he returned bringing with him as his bride the young Bedita. He called her Zuleika. He loves her; that is sufficient to arouse in me fresh schemes of vengeance. Zuleika and her babe may yet be spared; but she shall suffer sorrow so deep that she shall wish for death, and a heavy doom shall fall on him who dares to love a daughter of Vincenzo.

“My son is now on the Hellespont; and this Frank shall find that he still lives, and find it to his cost—though, as yet, I wait for the turn of circumstances to mature my schemes. Now, mother, let me hear your history during the many long years you were absent—as I thought dead.”

“My tale is brief,” replied Marca. “You know, daughter

of mine, that my husband once ruled over the islands which afterwards Vincenzo claimed as his own; but you knew not that he was your uncle. Arnault, my husband, was the elder brother of Vincenzo—the lineal descendant of a race of Greek warriors. He rescued Vincenzo, his younger brother, from the Turks of Salonica, and, bringing him to Scio, placed him next to himself in command; but Vincenzo saw me—I was young and handsome then—Time, and Grief, and Revenge, have made me what I am now. Arnault was absent with his galleys, and Vincenzo, who was left in command of the fortress, took advantage of Arnault's absence to work his base will on me. I resisted; but of what avail was the resistance of a weak woman. Vincenzo gained his end, and then threatened my life if I informed my husband. Nay, he threatened your life—you were then a mere child—if I betrayed him to his brother. Fears for you, not for myself, kept me silent.

“Years passed away, and Vincenzo began to envy his brother the dominion over the isles of which he was the sovereign ruler; and, on condition that he should remain in possession of the fortress of Scio, he betrayed Arnault to the Turk. My husband was seized and brutally tortured in my presence. He died beneath the torture, and then I was compelled to give my forced consent to Vincenzo's marriage with you. You were led to his harem; you know the rest. I was banished, sold into slavery, and for years I pined beneath its horrors; but I at length escaped, and, unknown to you, I aided in spreading disaffection amongst the enemies of Vincenzo. I have lived to see him slain; to see his family scattered. One daughter—the innocent bride of the Frank—alone remains. Zoe, I am growing aged. Our vengeance has been deep and sure. Let us snare Zuleika?”

“Her life! Yes : I will not take *her* life; but she shall feel the bitterness of living-death,” exclaimed Zoe, “it is useless to ask further mercy at my hands than this. But away; she dreads me, and I see her approaching. We must not be seen together.”

And the mother and daughter parted. Zuleika, accompanied by Jane Miller, approached the beach; and the former seated herself upon her accustomed seat and gazed with her earnest, thoughtful gaze, into the deep, blue horizon.

“You feel stronger, to-day, dear Zuleika,” said Jane Miller, “do you not? Your color is heightened and you look more like the Zuleika of our early acquaintance again.”

"Yes, I am better," replied Zuleika, "every day that brings the hour nearer when I may expect George to return, gives me renewed hope; and I feel the blood course more freely through my veins. But still I do not sleep well at night; and I dream strange, mournful dreams. Jane, you once loved George; so you yourself told me. How could you bear to live, when once you knew he did not love you?"

"Why do you ask?" said Jane, who was as much surprised at the tone in which the question was asked, as at its purport.

"Only, because, if George should ever cease to love me—should he even bestow a portion of his love upon another—I should wish to die."

"But you forget that Captain Seymour never knew of—never, therefore, could reciprocate my love," replied Jane. "Had he loved me, as he loves you, and had that love faded away or been transferred to another, the case would have been different."

"George never will forsake me, now; now I have a babe to cement our union," said Zuleika, thoughtfully, as though speaking to herself, "but, I wish he were here; for I have strange, fearful dreams, and we islanders are a little prone to superstition," she added, smiling a forced smile, which ill-concealed the uneasiness which rankled beneath.

"Do not give way to these feelings of despondency, dear Zuleika," replied Jane, "I trust a long future of happiness awaits you."

"And when George comes back, you will leave me, Jane?"

"Yes: Seymour will probably recognize me, now I have lain aside my disguise, and allowed my hair to grow long. If not, I shall tell my story and trust to his generosity to procure my return to my home. I have been very foolish, Zuleika, and I have suffered for my folly; probably shame and disgrace await me on my return; but I have brought it on myself, and must bear the burden."

"Disgrace await you!" exclaimed Zuleika. "Nay, Jane—your mother and friends will be too happy to have you restored to them again—and perhaps—when George lives always with me, and I accompany him wherever he goes—he may take me to America, and I may visit you at your own home. Will not that be delightful? How gaily we shall tell over our old adventures."

"Poor, simple child!" thought Jane Miller—though she did

not reply, "how little you know of the ways of the world. May you always remain as innocent and unsuspecting."

Several weeks passed away, and every evening Zuleika, accompanied by Jane Miller, visited the beach, and sat watching the broad expanse of water, and as the day of Seymour's expected arrival drew nigh, fancying that every strange prow that loomed through the evening haze, might be that of the returning wanderer. Often expectation grew into fancied certainty, and as often relapsed into sad disappointment, as vessel after vessel flitted by, like shadows, bound to some port or other amongst the numerous islands. But, one evening, just as the two young women were about to enter their cottage for the night—a large felucca was seen standing directly towards them. She was still a long way distant; but some strange instinct seemed to tell Zuleika that that felucca had on board her long expected husband. In vain Jane Miller, fearful of disappointment, endeavored to restrain her excitement.

"No—no—," she cried, "that is he—that is George returned at last. I am sure that it is he."

A white flag, the well-known signal, was shortly seen floating from the end of the gaff topsail boom. And Jane herself was satisfied at last, that Seymour had indeed arrived.

The felucca gracefully "rounded to" a short distance from the shore, and a small boat was lowered from her stern, into which a tall figure was seen to descend, which both Zuleika and Jane recognized as that of Seymour. A few vigorous strokes brought the boat to the landing-place—and Seymour sprung to the strand. In another instant Zuleika was locked in her husband's embrace.

"George—dear George—my husband—our child, George!" She wildly gasped—and then her feelings overpowered her and she sank fainting into Seymour's arms, her head resting upon his bosom.

And tenderly as a mother would bear a new born babe, Seymour bore the fainting girl towards the cottage.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Which treats of Domestic Matters—Sarah Mordant finds she has made a bad bargain—Mr. Harvey displays his cunning, with advantage to himself.

WE beg the reader to follow us, in imagination, into the interior of one of the finest mansions in — Place, New York. Seated upon a sofa in a spacious parlor magnificently furnished with all the appliances that wealth and refinement are able to procure, are two ladies, one considerably advanced in years ; but so elegantly attired and so well preserved, that the ravages of time are scarcely perceptible on her still smooth cheek and unwrinkled brow. The other, still a mere girl, is richly but more simply attired than her companion. Both are engaged in earnest conversation, and notwithstanding the rich heavy drapery of the curtains obscures the light that would otherwise stream in through the windows, and gives the room a sombre aspect, still increased by the heavy, rich furniture, the gorgeous, velvet tapestry carpet, and the massive gilt chandeliers that depend from the ceiling, it is evident that the countenances of both the ladies show traces of deep distress. These ladies are Mrs. Mordant and her daughter Mary.

Let us listen to the conversation that is going forward.

" Papa will surely receive her back home again, dear mamma," said Mary Mordant to her mother, in reply to some remark the latter had made.

" I scarcely know, Mary," returned Mrs. Mordant, " your father is justly and highly exasperated. The fact of her marriage with that swindler—which, in spite of all our efforts to conceal it, has become only too well known, might have been got over ; we might have spread the report abroad that the fellow was really the German Count he falsely represented himself to be, and since Sarah had sacrificed herself beyond redemption, your father might have procured some situation, at a distance from the city, for her husband, and so in time the disgraceful affair might have been hushed up and eventually forgotten. Indeed I had almost persuaded him to exert himself for this purpose, and he was on the point of sending them some money for their immediate necessities, when this letter

arrived from the graceless girl, announcing that her husband had absconded, taking with him a quantity of money and valuables he had purloined from some of the lodgers in the hotel in Western Canada, and that she has been detained by the hotel keeper, who holds her responsible for the robbery. The affair has got into the newspapers—worded mysteriously, but quite plain and significant enough to render it intelligible, and in fact, Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Doughty, who called this morning on a visit—purposely I believe to insult me, and who left just before you came down stairs, had the effrontery to commiserate my misfortune, and to express a hope that the *faux pas* of my eldest daughter might serve as a lesson to you. Oh—dear—dear. I shall never be able to survive this disgrace. It will be the topic of conversation not only throughout our own set, but will afford matter for scandal to all the gossips of the city. To think that a daughter of mine—brought up as Sarah has been with so much care, and in such correct principles—always kept aloof from low people—should so far forget herself!” and the old lady had again recourse to a flood of tears.

“And Louisa Jones and Lucy Doughty will be so glad of it. I’m sure they will—the stuck up creatures!” said Mary, “they have always been envious of us because papa is richer than Mr. Doughty and Mr. Jones—who both made their money as clothiers, down town, while papa is a merchant and ship owner—and of course, far above *them*. It couldn’t be expected that Sarah and I could exactly treat Louisa and Lucy as our equals, although they went to the same school, and gave themselves such airs; and now, they’ll have their revenge. I shall be ashamed to look them in the face again—I’m sure I shall.” And Mary followed the example of her mother, and giving way to a flood of tears, caused by mingled grief and vexation, buried her face in her handkerchief.

“And then there’s that man Dixon, the Quaker at Philadelphia,” said Mrs. Mordant, still sobbing hysterically as she spoke—“he has written to your father, threatening to sue Charles for damages—in consequence of his having married that hussy of a daughter of his, and then left her, and tried to enter into another matrimonial engagement with Mr. Wilson’s niece. Oh dear! oh dear! What will become of us?”

“Papa has money enough, ma, to satisfy him. I am sure I think Charles was right, not to take up with such a low creature as Jeanette Dixon—who has been running round the

world with some horrid sailors as Mr. Wilson says, and as she herself confesses."

"I am not so sure that your pa' has money to spare just now, my love. He never tells me anything about his circumstances, which I think is wrong; but I read some letters the other day, when he left the key of his writing desk at home, which satisfied me that he was just now greatly embarrassed, and the other day I asked him for some money, and for the first time in his life he refused me, and made some rude remark to the effect that he had something else to do with his money besides spending it in diamonds and such like trumpery; the result was that I was obliged to appear at Mrs. Phillpot's party with my old-fashioned jewels, while that odious Mrs. Doughty had a splendid new diamond necklace and bracelets."

"Oh ma'! you don't mean to say that pa' is a ruined man?" exclaimed Mary. "That would be horrible—worse than all—I'm sure I could never survive it. Pa' should have more regard for his family than to ruin himself."

"I don't assert, my dear, that he is a ruined man; but I feel confident, from various incidents that have happened of late, that he is temporarily embarrassed. He has suffered great losses in shipping; and since Captain Seymour came back he has been very cross and disconsolate. Since he received Sarah's letter I have been afraid to speak to him; and then there is that odious, vulgar Mr. Grindley, calling upon him every day and sitting with him for hours; and when he is not here, Mr. Harvey is. Altogether I am almost driven out of my senses."

"No wonder, ma'; but what is to become of Sarah?"

"Indeed I can't say," replied Mrs. Mordant. "I can hardly make up my mind to cast her off altogether, for I feel that she is still my child; but your father, since this morning, has been raving like a maniac, and he swears that she shall never darken his doors again."

"Sarah was always forward with the men," said Mary, who appeared to be dreadfully embittered against her sister. "She used to make me perfectly ashamed, the way she used to flirt with Captain Seymour, and he jilted her after all; and served her right."

Leaving the two ladies to their conversation, let us ascend to the study of Mr. Mordant, where he is sitting at the table at which we have heretofore introduced him to the reader, again busily occupied with a file of papers and documents of various

kinds, although his attention appeared to be absorbed at this moment in the perusal of a letter he holds in his hand. Vexation is depicted in his countenance, and muttered objurgations fall from his lips as he peruses the letter again for the third or fourth time. It has arrived this very morning from Canada, and its contents run as follows :

HAMILTON, C. W., August 10th.

DEAR PAPA AND MAMMA :—

Hardly a month has elapsed since I foolishly allowed my *affections* to be entrapped by that wicked man, who deceived me into marrying him, under the belief that he was not Henry Hecker, the music teacher, but Count Von Kemperblossen, and that I had become a Countess by marrying him. Oh, papa and mamma, your *erring* but *affectionate* daughter has been grossly *deceived* and *betrayed*, and she now sues for your forgiveness.

We waited a fortnight at Toronto, after I wrote the first letter to you, announcing, as I thought, my *happy* and *fortunate* marriage, but finding that you sent no reply and no *money*, Henry became cross and sulky, and one day, he started off in a hurry for this place. Here his conduct became still worse; in fact, *unbearable*; he grew *slovenly* and *careless* as regarded his personal appearance,—and, *would you believe it?* his hair and moustache turned *red* again. I asked him how it was, for I still *loved* him, and thought perhaps *grief* for me (because you had apparently forsaken me), had changed their color again, *as they did once before*. But I am *shocked* to write it! He made use of a *naughty* word, and said he had no money to purchase dye with. So his beautiful hair and moustache were dyed! I couldn't *bear* to see them in that frizzy state—and as red as carrots too—so, in my innocence, I brought him an ink bottle, and begged him to stain them with ink; and he said another naughty word and flung the ink bottle at me, and absolutely *ruined* my *best* dress. I burst into tears and then he came up and kissed me, and said he would *forgive* me, if on the next day I would write to you; and I promised I would. It was yesterday I was going to write, but during the evening some travellers came to the hotel, and Henry introduced himself to them, and staid drinking with them till past midnight; and then, instead of coming to bed, he told me that the night was fine, and he should walk out and clear his head from the fumes

of liquor—*faugh!* could I have thought that of Henry *a month ago*? But Henry didn't come back, and I was *dreadfully* frightened all night, and still more frightened in the morning when the landlord came in and told me that my husband had broken open the traveller's boxes, and stolen their money, and had gone off besides with the *silver spoons* belonging to the hotel, and that he should hold me accountable. I indignantly denied that Henry was *capable* of any such deed, and said he was the Count Von Kempenblossen in disguise; but the landlord had the impudence to tell me that he believed I was an accomplice, and that he should send me to prison. So I burst into tears, and told him and all the men and women present, that I was the daughter of Mr. Mordant, the great New York merchant and ship-owner; and a little man, in a shabby black coat, with his cuffs all stained with ink, who they called a reporter, began making marks on a piece of paper, *taking down*, he said, all I told. The landlord seemed inclined to believe me, and said he wouldn't send me to prison; but would keep me for the present locked up in my room, if I would write to you and ask you to refund the money for our board, and also the value of the stolen property, which he states amounts to \$700.00, besides a fortnight's board for me and Henry, \$150.00, including wines (Henry used to drink a great deal of wine, and always *the best* and *the most expensive*). I said I would; and he left me, giving me till to-day to compose myself; but I shall *never compose* myself again. In the evening the chambermaid, who brought me my tea, brought also a weekly paper, that was printed during the afternoon, and what do you think that impudent reporter had done? Why, put the story into the newspaper and published it. I send you the paragraph, which I cut out and have wafered it in my letter.

Now, dear papa and mamma, pray don't be angry with your *erring, heart-broken*, and truly *repentant* child; but pray send me the money and as much more as will bring me home again, or else I shall be driven to *desperation*, and shall climb up the chimney (for the door is locked and the windows are barred), and shall make my escape over the roof of the house and go and *drown myself* in the St. Lawrence. I have fully *made up my mind* to do that if you don't send the money.

Dear papa and mamma; your *heart-broken, erring* and *repentant* daughter will await your reply with *sighs* and *tears*, and *trembling anxiety*, and if it comes not, then farewell to *life*;

the cold clear waters of the St. Lawrence, shall close over the remains of

Your unhappy yet still loving

SARAH.

P. S. Let Mary send me on a dress to travel in, for I find that my worthless husband has taken with him all my best dresses.

SARAH.

P. P. S. I open my letter again to say that the chambermaid has told me, just now, that since the newspaper was published yesterday afternoon, that horrid, cruel, *ugly wretch*, Henry, whom I lately *doted* on so *fondly*, and whom I now *hate* just as much, has been *married before*. A woman has recognised him from his description upon the hand-bills, and says that he *was married to her three years ago*, and ran away from her *last year*, just before you engaged him to teach *me* music. She is a *horrid, ugly* woman, the chambermaid says, and takes in *washing* and *mangling* in the suburbs of this town.

Your doubly unfortunate child,

SARAH.

The paragraph, which had been cut from the newspaper, ran as follows :

"A strange and rather exciting affair came off this morning at the ——— Hotel. It appears that a fortnight ago a German, and a female whom he called his wife, came up from Toronto, and took lodgings at the above hotel. They had but little luggage, and as they did not offer to pay their board in advance—the landlord two days since, presented his bill to the man who had been living in most expensive style, and making free use of our worthy townsman's splendid wines. He promised payment the next day; and that same evening a party of travellers arrived with whom he ingratiated himself, and he remained in their company until midnight. In the morning it was discovered that their trunks had been broken open, and their money and valuables extracted, and subsequently it was found that all the silver spoons belonging to the hotel had been stolen. Suspicion fell upon the German, who, it was shortly discovered, had not been home all night, and the woman he called his wife was questioned respecting

him. She is either a complete simpleton, or else an accomplished swindler herself—we can hardly say which at present. She began to cry, or to feign tears; and said she was a Countess, and her husband was Count Von Kempenblossen *in disguise*; and on being told that she would be sent to prison, she said further that her father was Mr. M——, the well known ship-owner of New York; and that the *Count* had been engaged to teach her music, and she eloped with him. This may be true, or not—though, if it be so, it is unaccountable to us how so good-looking a girl could allow herself to be made the dupe of such an ungainly fellow as the pretended Count, whose whole attraction consisted in his immense quantity of hair, beard, moustache and whiskers, which were black when he arrived at the hotel, but as red as beet-root when he absconded. At present we have only given the initials of the merchant's name, as we cannot believe the girl's statement is correct. Still many of our readers will doubtless recognize the party alluded to, who, we expect, will immediately deny the imputation.

“Just as we were going to press, we learnt that a German woman, who takes in washing in this town, has recognized the description given of the swindler on the handbills, as that of her husband, who absconded from her a year ago, leaving her with four small children to support. She says the fellow's real name is Hans Koenig, and that he is by trade an itinerant fiddler. If the facts stated by the girl be true, the disgrace will fall heavily upon her family, and the affair will furnish abundance of scandal and gossip in more than one fashionable coterie in New York.”

“Confound the girl!” said the merchant, crumpling the letter up in his hand; and striking his hand heavily upon the table, he rose from his seat and strode rapidly to and fro across the room. “No, no; her mother may plead as she likes—never again shall she darken my door—never, never! She may take the consequences of her disgraceful and atrocious conduct. She may drown herself, if she pleases. So much the better for her and for all of us; but there's no fear of that, though. By — I wish she would. I should not have cared so much had the affair not got into the public prints. In the position in which I am placed at present, it will be another push down hill to ruin. And then the scorn of my friends and acquaintances—*friends!* forsooth! I shall blow my brains

out. This comes of the absurd education my wife has given to the girls. Well, she and they must reap the fruits of the seed she has sown. And there's that scoundrel Charles, too. Old Dixon threatens me with exposure and a lawsuit, unless I compromise matters, and settle \$10,000 on his hussey of a daughter. I have no doubt she deluded Charles into marrying her. However, I shall cut Charles off with a shilling. Henceforward he is no son of mine——"

The clock on the mantelpiece struck the hour of eight.

"Ha!" said the merchant, "eight o'clock already. That infamous fellow, Harvey, who, I verily believe, has been deceiving me all along, was to call at half-past eight, respecting that cursed affair of the Widow Miller's. I wish the whole of them were in perdition. It will not do, though, for the oily scoundrel to catch me in this excited condition;" and ringing the bell, which the servant answered, Mr. Mordant told him to show Mr. Harvey into the study if he should call, and then retired to his dressing room, to change his attire and bathe his face, and endeavor to disguise his agitation as well as might be, prior to the expected visit of the cool, astute lawyer.

When he returned, at the expiration of half an hour, Mr. Harvey was seated in the study.

He rose to salute the merchant as he entered, but did not speak, being apparently desirous that Mr. Mordant should be the first to commence the conversation.

"Well, sir," said the merchant, after a few moments' silence, "what is the result of your interview with Mrs. Miller?"

"The widow obstinately insists upon receiving not only the entire estate back, with all the improvements that you have made upon it, and the trebly increased rental, but she is avaricious enough also to demand the whole of the back rents at the rate of \$1,000 a year, for the entire period since the death of her husband, and if this is refused she threatens exposure. It is my opinion that she is aware of the whole of the circumstances attending the purchase of the estate by you, and of the *transactions*—you understand me?" and the lawyer looked keenly at his client—"the transactions between you and this Dutchman—Peyster or De Peyster. She regards the latter, however, as a simple dupe—a mere tool in your hands."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the merchant; "must I pay back the entire rents at the rate of \$1,000 a year? Why, the property has not brought that rent more than five years, and I have laid out thousands in its improvement; besides, surely it

should be taken into consideration that I purchased the property in the belief that the claim of Peyster was good——”

“Hold, my dear sir,” exclaimed Mr. Harvey; “supposing you did—and (it is useless to allow of double-dealing between a lawyer and his client, and I know, as well as you, that you thought no such thing)—but, I repeat, supposing you did; what would the court—and more than the court—what would the world say with regard to a wealthy man, who, upon the decease of a poor relative, sought out voluntarily and proved a claim that would deprive his widow of the main stay of her means of livelihood, and then purchased, for his own purposes, the property at a low cost? What would the world say of this, Mr. Mordant, even could you make it believe that you really thought the late Mr. Miller held the property by a false tenure?”

“Then I am to forfeit this large sum of money, or submit to a disgraceful exposure? Speak plainly, Mr. Harvey, is it so?”

“Even so, Mr. Mordant. You know the value of your reputation, whether or not it is worth the sacrifice.”

“I will pay the money and restore the property,” said the merchant, after thinking for some moments. “But, Mr. Harvey, as an offset to this loss on my part, cannot Mrs. Miller be persuaded to let it be made public in some roundabout way—not, of course, openly or pompously—that having discovered, by chance, that the Dutch claim, under which I purchased the estate, was not tenable, I generously returned it, with all the improvements, and all the back rents, to the widow? Such a report, freely but cautiously circulated, would almost reconcile me to the loss.”

“Perhaps that may be effected,” said the lawyer. “The widow will know better, but she will likely be so rejoiced at the idea of receiving back the property—quite a small fortune *to her*—that she will make no objection to throw in the plaster, if it will heal the sore.”

“And it might be hinted, also,” said the merchant, quite cheerfully—for he foresaw the advantages that would accrue to him if it were believed that he had behaved thus nobly and generously—“it might be hinted that I had procured her son, through my influence, an appointment in the navy, and had taken the youth under my protection, having an eager desire to push his fortunes for his father’s sake.”

“Yes, that *might* be hinted,” said the lawyer, ironically, though the irony was unperceived by the merchant.

"And now, my dear sir," continued Mr. Harvey, "there is that other little matter, with regard to Mr. Charles and old Dixon. The old man is obstinate. What do you intend to do—pay him the \$10,000 he demands?"

"No, sir; I believe Charles was ensnared—entrapped into this marriage. I intend to contest the case."

"And lose \$20,000, besides giving publicity to a matter, which, for the sake of all parties implicated, had better be kept secret, and buried in oblivion."

"But you don't mean to say that Dixon—or the infamous girl, rather—would gain the suit?"

"Unquestionably she would, and your son would have to allow the female a yearly sum in proportion to his circumstances at the period the marriage was consummated. Mr. Mordant, I have examined into this matter thoroughly. Your son has no loop-hole by which he can effect his escape."

"But I shall disinherit him. How can he pay the money then? I ought surely not to be accountable for his foolish conduct?"

"The world is censorious, Mr. Mordant. Is the opprobrium that would be cast upon your family, were this affair to become public, worth averting by the sacrifice of \$10,000, or is it preferable to suffer it to fall on you, and lose, besides, twice that sum? That is the question to be considered."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the merchant, "these payments, added to the losses I have lately suffered, will well nigh ruin me."

The lawyer smiled. "Nay, nay, Mr. Mordant," said he, "I know well that however annoying it may be to sacrifice so much money, the loss of twice that sum would not ruin you, or even shake your credit, always provided your reputation were preserved."

"If it is necessary—absolutely advisable and necessary—I will pay the money," said the merchant. "But," he added, "can a divorce not be procured?"

"No doubt it can, and I fancy that Miss Dixon, or rather I should say, Mrs. Charles Mordant and her friends, would then willingly aid in effecting one."

"Then Charles might yet marry Miss Wilson. In that case I would be half inclined to forgive the boy. His marriage with Marie Wilson would, for reasons that you know not of, be of vast pecuniary benefit to me."

"I doubt if Marie Wilson can be induced to consent to the

marriage," replied Mr. Harvey; "but that is a matter of after consideration. However, I have yet another affair to speak of. We may as well settle everything at once. Grindley has seen me respecting that threatened exposure of the affair of the Dolphin at Sierra Leone. I see no remedy but for you to pay the money demanded."

"The money has been paid. I trust I shall hear no more of that," said Mr. Mordant. And after a short conversation on other matters the lawyer wished Mr. Mordant good-night, and left him to his far from agreeable meditations. However, the first blow of misfortune is always the weightiest; those that fall later serve even to modify the pain; and the merchant, after giving vent freely to his feelings, and anathematizing Mr. Harvey and all of his class as a set of vampires, summed up his losses, and at length, for the first time that day, joined his family in the parlor below. The subject of the elder daughter's marriage was, however, not mentioned either by the father, mother, or sister.

Was Mr. Harvey actuated by sentiments of generosity and justice in the effective part he had played in obtaining for the widow the restoration of her property? Let us see.

On the morning following the lawyer's visit to Mr. Mordant he crossed the Jersey City Ferry, and wended his way to the widow Miller's cottage.

"I am happy, Mrs. Miller, to congratulate you on the success of my exertions to procure for you the restoration of the property unjustly withheld from you so many years by Mr. Mordant," said he, after he had entered the house and been invited to seat himself by the lady.

"Is it possible that Mr. Mordant has voluntarily given it up, without having recourse to legal measures?" said the widow, almost overcome with delight at the prospect of her coming good fortune.

"He has, madam, and the back rents with it, \$300 a year for the last ten years—amounting to \$3000. I could have insisted on \$1,000 a year for the last five years; but Mr. Mordant parted with the estate so willingly when he found that he was really its unlawful possessor—(do you know that I am half inclined to believe that he has not been quite so guilty as I was at first induced to think)—that I thought \$3,000 was sufficient to mulct him of; and as he has lost the estate, it would perhaps be a salvo if the rumor were spread abroad that he had restored the whole back rents, say \$10,000, though for

the first five years they did not much exceed \$300 per annum."

"As you please, Mr. Harvey," said the widow. "I leave everything in your hands. You have acted so generously, that I cannot be sufficiently grateful to you. You must accept of at least one-half of the \$3,000."

Mr. Harvey looked somewhat confused at this generous offer on the part of the widow, and the blood rushed to his cheeks; he knew that he should already pocket \$7,000; but the offer was too tempting to be refused. He gulped down the rising remorse of conscience, and merely saying that he had been at considerable expense and trouble, accepted the offer.

"Oh, if my poor Jane were only alive to share my good fortune!" said the widow, the tears rushing to her eyes as she thought of her long-lost child. "And my boy," she added, "I shall be able to help him forward now; \$1,000 a year added to the little income I now possess, will make me quite easy in my circumstances."

"The G——, in which ship your son sailed, is expected to arrive at Norfolk every day," replied the lawyer.

"Then I shall soon see my dear William," exclaimed the delighted mother, gratefully pressing the hand of the lawyer.

"God bless you!" she added. "God bless you, Mr. Harvey, for your kindness to the widow and the orphan. Would to God that there were more men like you."

"Don't mention that, madam," replied Mr. Harvey. "I have but done my duty. By-the-by, it would be as well if you did not call upon Mr. Mordant; or if you do, say nothing more than you can help respecting this affair. He naturally feels a little sore upon the subject; and, as I shall spread abroad the report that he has voluntarily restored the full amount of the back rents, it would be as well for you to make him think, should the subject be brought up, that you believe you have received them."

"Assuredly," said the widow; "I feel too grateful to him not to forgive his past misconduct, if indeed, he were cognizant of the injustice he was doing me and mine, and I am willing to serve him in any way I can. It will be a white lie," she added, smilingly; "one that the recording angel will blot out as he marks it down. I shall assist in spreading the report of his generosity, for he really *has* restored the rents as they were during my dear husband's lifetime."

"You will be acting generously, madam," said the lawyer, as he put on his hat and gloves, and left the cottage.

"So, so!" he said to himself, as he turned his steps towards home. I have made a comfortable thing out of this business—pocketed a cool \$8,500. My conscience stuck a little at the widow's offer, but I couldn't allow it to conquer. Now, with regard to this affair with Dixon, if I can get the old fellow to compromise, I don't think it will be difficult to deal with the girl. Perhaps, by writing to him, or, better still, seeing him, and stating that Mr. Mordant is willing to give \$5,000 or \$7,000 to hush up the matter, and will also lend his aid to obtain the divorce, which I know the girl wants to procure, I may make a few thousands out of that."

And, with the happy feeling that a man possesses, whose conscience will stretch conveniently to any length, when he has made a good day's work, and filled his pockets with the spoil cozened from others, the lawyer reached his home, and retired to his pillow to dream of his good fortune, and, perchance, to ponder over fresh schemes of professional extortion.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Which describes various Unexpected Interviews.

WE left Seymour just at the moment he had set his feet on shore on Zuleika's Isle, after his return from New York. Before, however, we proceed with his further history it is requisite for us to retrace our steps and relate the particulars of his visit to Camden—the abode of Mrs. Martin. The party, so singularly brought together, consisting of Captain Seymour, Mrs. Sarah Donaldson and Frank—started for Camden, the day following that of their arrival at Augusta. The journey was not a very long one; but during its course they found means to become as well acquainted each with the other as though they had known each other as relatives for years.

"By-the-by, Frank," said Seymour. "There is one small link in this chain of relationship which still requires clearing. You told me in New York, the evening you were so exceedingly communicative, that your father was an officer in the U.S.

Army ; but that your grandfather was drowned at sea. His name, that is your mother's father's name, must have been Donaldson. Now as yet I have heard only of the Mary Donaldson whom my scapegrace of a grandfather wedded, and this lady, Mrs. Sarah Donaldson here present, the question is, boy, who was your grandfather: was he a brother of this lady? I have not yet heard that Mr. Donaldson of Rose Abbey had a son."

"I'm sure I can't say, sir—I only know that I have heard my mother say that her father was drowned at sea, while engaged on a whaling voyage from Nantucket, and that her mother died very shortly after she heard the news of her husband's loss. My mother had been well educated, and she obtained a situation as governess in a family at Augusta, where she met my father, and whence he married her. More than this I know not. My mother has seldom spoken to me of her relatives in England."

"I can explain this mystery," said Mrs. Donaldson, who, although very feeble and still sometimes rather flighty in her conversation, appeared to possess a fund of good sense, and to be a woman of great intelligence. "Mary, my elder sister, had two brothers, William and Frank, both younger by several years than we ; and Frank was the younger of the two ; William married a young lady who died in giving birth to a daughter who was named Sarah, who with her father accompanied me to the United States some years since, and who have never been heard of since they left the hotel at which we put up in New York, in order to make a short tour up the Hudson. I was in ill health at the time, or I should have accompanied them. It was in the month of August, 184—. William inherited a considerable property from an uncle who had declared him his heir from the period of his earliest boyhood ; and as our father's property was not entailed upon the oldest son, and William was amply provided for, he resolved to leave his fortune, which was sufficient, though not large, to his daughters and his younger son Frank. Frank was our favorite brother. He was so much younger than any of us that we considered him as the pet of the family, and he was completely spoiled. As he grew up, being naturally of an impetuous disposition, he became headstrong and obstinate, always obeying his own impulses, although in opposition to the will of his father or the advice of his brother and sisters. Still we loved him, he was so kind-hearted and so generous. At the age of eighteen he

fell in love with the pretty daughter of one of our father's tenants, and acting upon his headstrong impulses, he married her privately, she then being only sixteen years of age.

"Our father was greatly exasperated, and he vowed he would never allow the young married couple to enter his door, nor acknowledge the cottager's daughter as his son's wife. I have no doubt, however, that had Frank behaved submissively, he would have looked over the *mesalliance* in the course of time, and all would have gone on well ; but Frank got into a furious passion ; declared he would never ask his father's pardon, and would not allow his wife to enter his father's house. Our father said he would expunge his name from his will, and in the heat of passion he did so. Frank wrote to me, telling me that he had determined to go with his young bride to the United States, and make that his adopted country, and that he should work his way out in a packet ship, and afterwards send for his wife. He also stated that he always had an inclination for the sea, and intended thenceforward to adopt it as his profession. I showed the letter to William and Mary, and we talked the matter over together. The result was that I wrote to Frank, begging him to alter his resolve and saying that his father's anger would soon cool down. However, he replied that he had fully made up his mind and nothing could make him change it. Being well aware that further expostulation would be useless, William sent him a few hundred pounds as a loan—had he not stipulated that, Frank would never have accepted it—so that he was enabled to take a passage for himself and his wife on board a comfortable ship, and to have, besides, a small surplus when he arrived in America. He subsequently wrote to us, saying that he had shipped on board a whaler, and for some years we heard nothing of him. At length a letter arrived from him containing a bill of exchange for the lent money, in which letter he stated that he had obtained the command of a whaleship out of Nantucket, and that his wife had given birth to a daughter. We never heard from him individually again ; but from a foreign source we heard some years afterwards that the whaler he commanded had been lost at sea. Shortly after this, father had died, leaving his property to me. I wrote to the United States several times, in the hope to discover the whereabouts of the young widow and her child ; but in vain. Again years passed ; still, whenever opportunity occurred, I continued to prosecute my inquiries, and at last I heard from a friend who had been travelling in America that he had been

told that Mrs. Donaldson, Frank's widow, had died shortly after she had received the intelligence of her husband's death, and that the daughter had grown up and married an officer of the United States Army, named Martin; also that she was a widow, and had a daughter named Sarah. He did not know whether she had any sons or not, but did not think she had. William and I and his daughter resolved to come ourselves to America, and endeavor to trace out Frank's child. I was so pleased at his widow's calling her daughter after me, that I determined to make the little girl my heiress. We heard, on our arrival in this country, that the widow Martin was residing somewhere in the State of Maine—and we were on our way thither, when my poor brother and his child were lost so mysteriously. I was in ill health, and the shock so affected me that I lost my reason; and for some time, even after my recovery, I lived the life of a recluse, until a curious circumstance occurred, which is not worth while to allude to further just now—which awakened my dormant inquiries. I pursued my investigations, and thank Heaven they have been crowned with success. I have found, however, that I have two grand nephews as well as a grand niece to share my fortune, and that of my poor brother William, which reverts to me, should not he or his daughter be again heard of?"

"You have fully cleared up the last doubt in the chain of evidence, as the lawyers would say, madam," said Seymour. "But where are we. The stage has stopped. You should know the country, Frank, since you were 'to the manor born.' What place is this?"

"Camden, by Jove?" said Frank, looking out of the window; and then springing from the stage. "A quarter of an hour's walk will carry us to my mother's residence, which is right on the cliff, overhanging the bay. We can see it from that hilly road, which we shall have to pass over."

The party alighted from the stage, and leaving their luggage to be carried to the widow's cottage by a porter, proceeded on their way. It was a wild, romantic country—the scenery we have heretofore described in the fifth chapter of our story—and all the party being in high spirits, they enjoyed the walk greatly.

Soon they arrived on the brow of the precipice, where a precipitous road led to the valley in which the farm and cottage were located. The sun was shining brilliantly, and the bay beneath them glistened with its rays. The little islet, whereon

Frank had in former days—six years ago—fancied himself a second Robinson Crusoe, spread its dark shadow over the clear smooth water, and the young sailor was recounting to Seymour the particulars of his boyish fancy, greatly to the amusement of the captain, when a lovely girl, who was gathering wild flowers in the hedge-row, started at the approach of unwonted visitors and endeavored to hide himself in a copse by the wayside. But Frank had seen and recognized her.

“My sister Sarah!” he exclaimed, and stopping short in his story he sprang to embrace her. In a few minutes he led her to his companions, and introduced her to her grand aunt, and to Seymour.

“And this is my namesake and grandniece, Sarah Donaldson Martin,” said Mrs Donaldson, embracing the blushing girl. “Well, she is one I may well be proud of.”

“What a pretty girl,” said Seymour. “Frank, you have found me a cousin it will be a pleasure to fancy myself related to.”

He spoke the truth. Sarah Martin, whom we have heretofore described as giving promise, in her early girlhood, of great beauty, had grown, now in her fourteenth year, to be a most lovely girl, still however, preserving her timid, retiring disposition. Frank was her favorite brother, and tears of delight filled her large, soft, dark blue eyes, as, her hand locked in his, she led the way with him to their mother's abode.

The widow received her son, now a fine young man of twenty years of age, as one arisen from the dead; for, as one that was dead, had she mourned for him.

A couple of days were spent happily in this lovely, peaceful home; and Mrs. Donaldson seemed suddenly to have grown young again, as she sat at the cottage door in the clear, soft summer evening, and talked with her niece of those relatives of whom the latter had known so little. Seymour enjoyed himself roaming on the sea-shore with Frank, and visiting the long-forsaken Crusoe's cave; and had he had Zuleika with him, felt that he could have been content to make his home here, with her for his constant companion; but his business required him to return, after a sojourn of a day or two, to New York, for he was anxious to complete the arrangement of his affairs, and hasten to rejoin his wife in her distant island home. Mrs. Donaldson, too, had her own affairs to settle, and she much wished that Frank should accompany her, promising when everything was satisfactorily arranged, to return and

live at the cottage, for she had no other relative but her niece, that she knew of, then living. Frank, it was settled, was to return with her; and now that the circumstances of the family were so promising, he agreed to stay thenceforward with his mother, and enlarge and superintend the duties of the farm. Sarah had never been far away from home—never further than Augusta—and her brother obtained his mother's consent for her to journey with them, as they intended to visit both Boston and New York, and Sarah was anxious to see her brother William.

They set out on their journey; first visiting Augusta, where Mrs. Donaldson placed her affairs into the hands of Mr. Deane to arrange, and then proceeded direct to Boston, where Seymour and Mrs. Donaldson were introduced to William Martin, and Sarah was enabled to spend a short time with her elder brother. Thence after a few days' stay, just sufficiently long to see the the "lions" of the city and its environs, they took seats in the cars for New York.

William Martin walked to the depot with them to see them off; and just as they were on the point of starting, he said—"By-the-by, Frank, I had almost forgotten to tell you that the U. S. frigate G——, arrived at Norfolk three days since; so you did not get much the start of her after all."

"No," said Frank, as he shook his brother by the hand, as the cars were put in motion, "the vessel I came home in sailed like a wash-tub."

Mrs. Donaldson and Sarah took two seats by themselves, which chanced to be vacant, while Seymour and Frank occupied a double seat, the place in front of them being already partially occupied by a young man, wrapped in a blue cloak, who appeared to have been travelling from some distance, for he was soundly sleeping. The motion of the cars, however, awoke him, and starting up, he threw off his cloak, remarking that it was growing warm, and displayed beneath, the uniform of a midshipman of the United States Navy.

The uniform at once attracted the attention of Frank, and looking in the face of the wearer he recognized Thomas Miller, his late shipmate on board the G——.

"Mr. Miller!" he exclaimed, "do you not recognize me, sir? I am Frank Martin, the sailor that was rescued by the G—— from the floating wreck off the Bahamas."

"God bless me, Frank, how do you do?" exclaimed the

young officer, freely extending his hand, "I recollect now, you were sent home invalided from the frigate."

"Yes," replied Frank, "allow me, sir, to introduce to you Captain Seymour. Yonder sits my aunt and sister; I will present you to them by-and-by. Captain Seymour," he added, "this gentleman and I were in very different stations on board the G——, but he is not too proud to recognize me, you see."

"Certainly not," said the young midshipman; "we are not on shipboard, you know, now; but did you say this gentleman's name was Seymour; Captain Seymour?" and he looked at Seymour with no pleasant expression of countenance.

"Yes," replied Frank, "this is Captain Seymour."

"Did you command the Albatross, a trading vessel belonging to Mr. Mordant of New York, sir?" asked the young officer.

"I did," replied Seymour, "and the thought has just struck me—surely, you are not the brother of Miss Jane Miller, who is, I believe, a relative of Mr. Mordant?"

"I am her brother, sir," said the midshipman sharply.

Seymour appeared to be astonished at the vehemence of his tone; but a sudden recollection flashed through his mind.

"I perceive, Mr. Miller," said he, "that you are inclined to think evil of me. I recollect now that your sister unaccountably left her home, sometime since now—just before I last sailed in command of the Albatross, from New York. But, surely, she has since returned, or been heard of?"

"She has not," replied the midshipman.

"Dear me, dear me, this is sad news," said Seymour. "I remember that your mother thought harshly of me in regard to my conduct towards her daughter. But, Mr. Miller," he added, earnestly; and extending his hand again, "I give you my word of honor, I know nothing of your sister's disappearance, and I was grieved deeply when I heard of it."

There was something in the impressive tone of Seymour's voice, that convinced the young man that he spoke the truth, and he frankly took the captain's extended hand. "I am glad to hear you say so," he replied, "and I believe you; but I fear my sister is lost for ever—is dead!" and his voice trembled as he spoke.

Seymour did not reply, and some time elapsed ere the conversation thus suddenly broken off was resumed. However,

Tom Miller was young ; he was going home to see his mother after his first voyage at sea ; he was going home in all the splendor of a new uniform, which set off his person to advantage, to captivate the maidens of New Jersey, and which had been purchased and fitted expressly for the occasion, at Norfolk, after the arrival of that ship, and his reserve gradually wore off. The conversation was resumed in a cheerful strain, and when the cars arrived at the depot in New York, the young officer pressed all the party to accompany him to the residence of his mother in Jersey. Seymour was glad of the opportunity. He wished to see the widow and talk with her of Jane. Yet he did not like to offer to pay her a visit. The others of the party had no particular place to go to, and they willingly assented.

In the course of half an hour after they had alighted from the cars, they were at the door of Mrs. Miller's cottage. The widow was overjoyed to see her son safe returned, and after the first transports of affection had passed, she said :

"Dear Tom, you have arrived most opportunely. A lady has called upon me this morning, who was on board the ship of war with you—the same by whom you sent me the letters. She has come from New Orleans. She was answering my inquiries respecting you when you arrived"—

"Can it be Miss Herbert!" exclaimed Tom.

"Yes, that is the name," replied the widow.

"Miss Herbert!" exclaimed Frank Martin. "How strange a circumstance. She was saved with me from the wreck."

"You saved her, Frank Martin," said Tom Miller, pressing the young sailor's hand.

"You do not recognize *me*—Captain Seymour—Mrs. Miller," said Seymour advancing to the widow, and speaking in a tone of voice expressive of deep feeling.

"Captain Seymour!" exclaimed the widow. "Yes, I recollect you now," and the tears gushed to her eyes, as the sight of him called to her mind the loss of her daughter. "Captain Seymour," she continued, "I exonerate you from all blame—this visit itself would serve to show that you are innocent of any harm towards my poor girl ; but she is lost to me for ever."

The party were conducted by the widow to the room where our old acquaintance, Miss Herbert, was seated. She recognized readily the preserver of her life, and the young midshipman of the G——, and warmly welcomed them home.

The conversation soon became general, when Tom Miller suddenly thought of the mystery of the ring.

"Dear mother," he said, "did you at any time miss the ring you wore, as a memento of my sister, during my absence?"

"No, my boy," replied Mrs. Miller; "nor could I understand the strange purport of your letter with regard to it."

"Nevertheless," said Tom, "I am positive that that very ring was sent to me by a beautiful girl, who we discovered residing in seclusion on the Island of Annabon, and who said she was my sister—though she did not in the slightest degree resemble poor Jane, and it is equally as certain that the ring was spirited away mysteriously from the till of my chest; and what is more singular, I lost it on the day we again visited the island, when not only the lady who sent it, but every vestige of her abode was gone. The negroes said the *Obeah* had spirited her away, and desolated the spot."

The widow looked at her son with alarm and anxiety depicted in her countenance. She thought he was still laboring under some fearful delusion.

Miss Herbert, however, who had been listening interestedly to the conversation, interfered. "Mr. Miller," she said, "I can account for the sudden disappearance of your ring, though the mystery surrounding the White Lady of Annabon, is beyond my comprehension. If you recollect, you left a packet of letters for me in the till of your chest, the day I was leaving the *G——*. You were absent, and I went to your chest to take out the package, which I was near forgetting. In the till I saw this ring lying (she took a ring from her pocket), and as it closely resembled one that I possessed, I thought it was my own, which by some means had fallen from my person. I took it, and not until I had arrived at New Orleans, did I discover that I had my own ring in my possession. It is exactly similar, you see (and she took the second ring from her pocket), even to the letter *J* engraved inside," and she handed both rings to the young officer. "You may think it strange," she continued, "how the letter *J* should be engraved on a ring of mine—that is to say if you conceive it to be the initial letter of my own name, which it is—but my name is Jeannette Dixon; and—I have already told all to Mrs. Miller—the ring was given me by Charles Mordant. Unhappily, I am his wife. He was the cause of my going on board ship. But I will not dwell upon that now."

"Pray, favor me with a sight of those rings!" exclaimed

Seymour; and having looked at them, he continued, "Frank, Miss Deane, to whom you introduced me in New York, a short time since, wears exactly such a ring as this."

"It was given her by my brother William," replied Frank, who seemed utterly incapable of comprehending the drift of the conversation. "Miss Deane's name is Jessica, and William had the name engraved upon it, and sent it to her, he tells me, as a *gage d'amour*. There is some strange tale depending upon that ring; my brother endeavored to explain it to me; but, really, I could not understand him."

"I can explain that," said Mrs. Donaldson; "I saw the ring on the finger of Miss Deane. It was exactly like one that I had made for my poor niece, and a *fac simile* of a ring her mother, whose baptismal name was Jane, used to wear. It was through that ring I first became acquainted with Mr. Deane, and our meeting led to the discovery of my long-lost niece, your mother, Frank."

"It was a ring, the very counterpart of that, that I gave to Miss Miller, when I bade her farewell, just before her unaccountable disappearance," said Seymour. "May I ask Mrs. Donaldson, where you had that ring manufactured?"

"At the store of Mr. ———, in Boston," replied Mrs. Donaldson.

"That was where I purchased the ring I gave Miss Miller," said Seymour.

"And where William purchased the ring he gave Jessica," said Frank.

"And Charles Mordant told me he bought my ring in Boston," said Jeannette Dixon.

"It is very evident that the jeweller must have manufactured duplicates of the ring, probably on account of its strange antique fashion," said Seymour. "And" (turning to Mrs. Donaldson), "you have said your niece was lost, madam. How and when?"

"I fear she was drowned in the Hudson, in the month of August, 184—," replied Mrs. Donaldson.

"In August, 184—" muttered Seymour; "that was only a few days after I gave the ring to Jane, Mrs. Miller" (turning to that lady), "was there any thing else besides the ring, from which you could recognize your daughter?"

"Nothing," replied the widow; "the poor creature's body was so decomposed that it could not be recognized."

"Then might it not have been the niece of Mrs. Donaldson,

who was lost about that period? At any rate, it affords some hope that poor Miss Miller is still living."

"I fear not, or I should have heard of her ere this," replied the widow.

"All this doesn't explain how I got the ring from the re-cluse of Annabon," said young Miller.

"No," replied Jeannette Dixon, "it does not. Who she was, is still a mystery; and she wrote me a letter as singular and inexplicable in its purport as that which you received from her. However, she must have been possessed of such a ring, and the poor creature, whoever she was, was undoubtedly insane. Pity, too, for she was a lovely girl."

"That she was, indeed," said Tom.

Seymour was anxious to arrange his affairs, and he shortly afterwards rose to take his leave, and Frank and Sarah rose to leave with him.

After Seymour had wished the widow farewell, Thomas Miller walked up to Frank, who was standing at the door—

"Frank," said he, "you must ask me to Camden to see your home. I should like to see your sister again."

"With pleasure," replied Frank. "We shall shortly return home; come as soon as you can make it convenient."

And then, having bade adieu to Mrs. Miller, he stepped up to Jeannette—

"Miss Herbert," said he, "I will still call you by that name—we must not part for ever thus. You will allow me to see you again?"

Miss Herbert pressed the hand of the youth in token of assent, and walked by his side until they reached the gate at the end of the garden, when she returned with Thomas Miller to the cottage.

Seymour, and Frank and his sister, returned to New York, and took up their quarters at the Astor House; and, a few days after this happy meeting, having satisfactorily arranged all his affairs, the former sailed for the Mediterranean, and arrived safely at Zuleika's Isle, at which place we left him just landed, at the termination of a foregoing chapter.

When the young midshipman returned to the cottage, the widow related to him the happy change in her circumstances, but she carefully abstained from saying anything detrimental to Mr. Mordant.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Seymour's first sight of his Child—Jane Miller discovers herself to Seymour.

"She, as she gazed with grateful wonder, pressed
Her '*smiling babe*' to her impassioned breast,
And, suited to her soft caresses, told
An elder tale of love—for love is old—
Old as eternity, but not outworn
With each new being born, or to be born.

* * * * *

The sterner spirits who beheld that meeting
Were not unmoved; who are, when hearts are greeting?"

The Island.

THE reader will recollect that Zuleika had fainted with excess of joy in her husband's arms, after having met him on the beach on his return to her island home; and he had borne her lightly as though she were a child to her cottage, where she soon recovered, for excess of joy, although it sometimes overpowers, rarely prostrates the powers of mind and body for long together, and on waking from her blissful trance and gazing wildly around her, as she passed her hand across her brow, as though to assure herself that she was not dreaming, and that her husband had indeed returned to her, the proud young mother sprang to the cradle of woven rushes, in which the infant was reposing, and catching her up in her arms and covering her with kisses, she brought her to Seymour, and with a bright smile placed the baby in its father's arms.

Seymour received the infant, and handling it carefully, as though he were afraid that he should crush its tiny frame, he stooped and imprinted upon the baby's cheek the father's first kiss, and then restored it to its mother, saying,

"'Tis a pretty babe, my Zuleika. How have you called it?"

"Zuleika, as you bade me call my child should it be a girl," answered the young mother. "But don't you think it resembles you greatly, George? See, the nose and mouth are yours exactly."

"Are they?" replied Seymour, smiling. "Well, maybe they are, dearest; but really, if you hadn't told me I should never have discovered it. I learn for the first time that I have got a pug nose—for such all babies have—and as to the mouth,

I was not aware my own was such a rosy-looking buttonhole of an aperture."

"You are teasing me, George," said Zuleika, half smiling and half inclined to cry, for she scarcely knew in what light to take her husband's *badinage*.

Seymour perceived that she was annoyed ; and, bending over her and kissing her brow, he replied :—

"Why, what a sensitive little creature you are, darling. I was joking. Like me ! to be sure she is, if you will have it so—eyes, nose, mouth and all—and I shall love her very much because she is my own Zuleika's first born——"

"But the eyes are like mine, George !"

"Are they dear ; let me see. Yes, to be sure they are—exactly, when they are open, I dare say ; but they are closed now."

"And the contour of the face——"

"Is yours, too, dear, I suppose—or let us hope it will be some day ; for if the baby grows up like her mother, she will assuredly be all that the proudest father can desire."

"Then you are not displeased that it is not a boy, George ? I was afraid that you might wish it were a boy."

"Why so, my love ?"

"I scarcely know," replied Zuleika, looking up, blushing and smiling into her husband's face, "but I fancied so sometimes, although Jane told me that I was silly to do so."

"Ha !" exclaimed Seymour, now for the first time looking into the face of Jane Miller—who had been standing aside, watching with delight the re-union of Seymour and Zuleika, and at once recognizing her—"Miss Miller !—Jane ! Tell me, am I deceived ? Jane Miller here ! Good God ! How and when did you come here ?"

A new idea suddenly darted through his brain, as he intently scrutinized the features of the young woman ; and, turning to Zuleika, he added—

"Where is Henry Davis, dear ? I had forgotten him. He is still here ?"

And he looked inquiringly at his wife, and then again, half doubtingly, half satisfied, at Jane.

"Harry Davis, or at least she whom you believed to be Harry Davis, now stands before you, Captain Seymour," replied Jane. "But you are right, I am Jane Miller, although now for the first time since I took the ill-advised, the reckless, the mad step, I did, when I engaged on board the Albatross

in New York, as your cabin boy, you see me in my proper attire. I have resolved to keep up an improper disguise no longer, let the consequences be what they may."

Jane fancied that she had strength enough to go through that which she was well aware would prove to be a trying ordeal, but she suddenly hesitated, stopped, and sinking on a sofa, she laid her head upon Zuleika's shoulder and wept.

"My mother—my mother," she sobbed; "Oh! Captain Seymour, you have been in New York—tell me, have you seen my mother—is she still living—and—does—does she ever speak of me?"

"I have seen your mother, Miss Miller," replied Seymour. "I saw her but a day or two before I left New York, scarcely more than six weeks ago, and she does think and speak of you; poor lady, she constantly laments your loss, and believes you to be dead. But—I really seem to have fallen a victim to some enchantment—I can't understand now what all this means—I surely am not dreaming!" and he passed his hand over his forehead and rubbed his eyes, as if to assure himself that he was awake.

Jane whispered something to Zuleika, while Seymour was speaking, and then, rising from the sofa, she left the room.

"Am I dreaming, Zuleika?" asking Seymour, when she had gone; "can you explain—what is the meaning of this?"

"Jane has desired me to explain that which she finds herself unable to do, dear George," replied Zuleika. "I have known—since a very few weeks after you left the cabin boy, Harry, as you imagined, to be my companion, on the Island of Annabon—that it was not Harry the cabin boy, but a young woman, in disguise, you had left with me. Listen, George, and I will tell you all;" and Zuleika related to her wondering husband, the accident which had taken place that led to the discovery of the sex of her companion, and the conversation that had subsequently ensued, and when she had finished the recital, she added: "You little knew, George, how really a valuable companion you had found me; and now I am only sorry that she is resolved to leave me, perhaps, for ever."

Seymour had gazed upon the fair features of the narrator of this romantic history, glowing as they did with generous feeling, and he felt how priceless a treasure he possessed in her love—so pure, so exalted, so innocent, so free from even a thought of guile; for well he knew that in the bosom of one less artless and less innocent than Zuleika, the seeds of distrust

and jealousy would have been immovably sown, and the future of her love and her life embittered beyond the possibility of recovery, and when she added, after having concluded the narration—"And now, dear George, you will not be vexed with Jane, for my sake, for she has often trembled when she thought of the moment when her secret would be made known to you,"—he replied, kissing the cheek of the lovely, artless pleader :

"Angry ! darling ! It is Jane and you, who have reason to be angry—not I. But she is right, dear—it is better that she leave us now and return to her mother ; still, Zuleika—I cannot understand how I never recognized her. The features I now perceived are those of Jane Miller, and I often fancied I recognized a resemblance in the boy Harry, to some one I knew ! but Harry was as brown as a Spaniard—and Jane though not so fair as you, is certainly a very fair brunette."

Zuleika laughed merrily—"I wonder if I could so disguise myself that you should not know me, George," said she. "Jane stained her skin with some preparation she had with her, and cut off her long dark hair. It is only lately that her skin has been so fair, and her hair has grown to its present length since last you sailed for America."

Jane Miller still remained absent, and naturally enough, the conversation reverted to another subject; that of their own hopes in the future, intermingled with brief retrospections of the past.

"And now, George," said Zuleika, who had lain the sleeping infant in the cradle and sat child-like on her husband's knee, one arm thrown around his neck, and holding his hand in her's, "Now, dear George, you know what you promised me when last we parted, you will never, never leave me alone again."

"Never, dearest—at least never again for so long a time. For the present I shall take up my abode here, until I have determined upon some plan of action. Would my Zuleika be glad to see the great world of which she has hitherto known so little?" he asked—parting the silky hair from her forehead with his fingers as he spoke—and imprinting a kiss upon the fair smooth brow.

"With you for a companion—yes; or I would be happy to live always on this island if you would consent to remain for ever with me. Still I should like to visit the cities I have read of, and to roam amidst the fair scenes which have been rendered so familiar to me in books. But only to visit them, George, with you, and then to return here or to some other pleas-

ing solitude, and pass my days, happy in your love, and in watching over our child."

"And, perhaps, other babies would come in time, eh, Zuleika?" said Seymour smiling, and patting the cheek of his blushing "child wife."

And so for hours they sat building hopes and laying out plans for the future, forgetful of all else but themselves and their love for each other. One had little but that to think of any time, for her young life had, from the days of her early childhood, been bound up in the love of Seymour; but the other—there were many dark shadows in the past which still haunted *him*, and his conscience was laden with gloomy forebodings of the future—but on this evening, which reunited him to Zuleika, all these gloomy forebodings were forgotten, and he might well have addressed her in the passionate words of the poet :

"Ay, let me, like the Ocean patriarch, roam,
Or only know on land, the Tartar home ;
My tent on shore, my galley on the sea,
Are more than cities and Serais to me ;
Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail
Across the desert, or before the gale.
Bound where thou wilt, my barb, or glide my prow,
But be the star that guides the wanderer, thou.
Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my bark—
Thê dove of peace and promise to my ark !
Or since that hope denied in worlds of strife,
Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life,
The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray !"

And still they sat holding loving converse until the midnight hour had flown by. These were amongst the happiest and purest hours that Seymour had known. The full moon, which in that clear atmosphere appears to float like a ball of silvery flame midway in the heavens, shed a halo of softly tempered light into the little room in which the husband and wife were seated, and they spoke in low murmurs, yet strangely distinct amidst the silence that reigned around; for, save themselves and perchance Jane Miller, who still occupied her own chamber, all on the island were wrapped in slumber. The breeze of the early evening, which had wafted the felucca of Seymour to the shore, light as it had been, had died away, and a profound stillness prevailed, only broken by the whispers and low murmurs of the loving and reunited pair, and the song of

a nightingale which had perched itself in a tree close by, and thence was pouring forth an occasional melody to cheer his partner as she sat patiently nestling over her young brood, while the wild mournful wail of the surf which beat incessantly upon a line of rocky coast, a mile or two distant from the cottage, served only to render the silence of the hour more solemnly impressive.

At length Zuleika, weary with watching, with soft whispers of love yet trembling upon her lips, dropped her head upon her husband's bosom, and, still sitting on his knee, fell sound asleep; and then Seymour rose up and gently carried her to a couch and laid her down, and feeling himself that he needed rest (for he had travelled fast and far, with little delay, to hurry to his bride), he laid him down gently by her side, and kissing her slightly parted lips, which murmured his name in response to the embrace, he, too, was soon asleep.

Morning dawned over Zuleika's Isle—another day of jubilee to the simple islanders, for the lord of the isle had returned from far-off lands, across the wide ocean, and this was a fitting occasion for a people, so fond of innocent amusements as the unsophisticated Greeks of the isles, to keep holiday.

And Seymour and his bride went amongst them and distributed gifts, and joined cheerfully in their games, until the morning grew late, and the rays of the sun shone too ardently, when they returned to the cottage, and Zuleika sought the chamber of her companion, and soon returned with a message to her husband from Jane Miller, asking him to grant her a private interview, and Seymour, who had been expecting this, immediately joined Jane in the garden behind the cottage.

It were needless for us to repeat conversation, the purport of which the reader, who has followed us through our story, will readily surmise; but we will listen in imagination to the concluding portion of the conversation.

"That I was wrong, dear Jane, in encouraging hopes that I knew would never be realized, I freely confess. I might have known, perhaps I did know, that I was encouraging a belief in your mind that I loved you, and would one day claim you as my bride; but I meant no harm. I fled from the persecution of the host of insipid, frivolous creatures, who harassed and annoyed me, and sought your company because I found that you had more sense than all of them put together, and partly—pardon me for telling you this—because I saw that they slighted you; treated you with scorn and contumely because they had

more money and wore more diamonds in their hair and more jewelry than you could afford to do. I resolved to let them perceive that, gallant, and ladies' man as they thought me, I had the wisdom at least to prefer good sense to frivolity, and simple, natural beauty and intelligence to cosmetics and paint, and tinsel adornments. Perhaps—but no matter, it was otherwise decreed, and it was too late. I grieve that I should have been the cause of your taking so startling, so bold a step as you did. Pardon me, Jane, but I should have given you credit for better sense. I will speak plainly with you. I acknowledge I was wrong, very wrong. But hesitate not to return to your mother; she will receive you with tears of joy, and what need you to care for any one else—least of all for those butterflies of fashion, among whom I first met you. Jane, I know enough of your uncle Mordant to enable me to assert that he and his are far, far below you and yours, in all that constitutes moral worth, aye, and social position, too, and the world would say this if it knew all."

He ceased to speak, and Jane remained silent for some minutes. At length she said :

"You say, too, you met my brother. Did he—did Tom mention his sister's name?"

"He did, and looked fiercely enough at me when I was first introduced to him in the cars on my way from Boston to New York. Jane, your brother will be as much delighted as your mother to greet again his long lost sister. By-the-by, that reminds me of a strange mystery which, perhaps, you can explain. Your brother now holds a midshipman's appointment in the United States navy; and some time since he was on the African coast on board the G—— frigate, which vessel, it appears, called at Annabon, and the captain, accompanied by your brother, visited the island, and saw Zuleika. Surely you must have recognised your brother?"

"I did."

"Then why did you not make yourself known to him?"

"Pride, shame—a singular admixture of contrary feelings forbade me to do so."

"And he—how was it that he did not recognize you?"

"He was so much engaged with Zuleika, that he scarcely cast his eyes upon me; besides, I was dressed as a sailor boy. It was improbable, even had he regarded me, that he would have recognized his sister in me."

"Jane," said Seymour, after a few moments silence, "I

gave you a ring—a ring of singular and antique appearance—a few days before we parted from New York ; have you that ring now ?”

“ No ; why do you ask ?”

“ I have my reasons ; but I will not press you to tell me what became of it, if you desire not to do so.”

For a few moments the young woman was silent, at length she said :—

“ Captain Seymour, I sent that ring to my brother. Why should I not tell you all ? I felt deeply because my brother did not recognize me, although I hoped, at the same time, that he would not ; and when I saw his retreating form as he was leaving the cottage at Annabon to return on board the ship—for I was watching him from another room of our little cottage—I sent for Zuleika, and told her that I had recognized a friend in one of the strangers, and begged her to detain the party for some few minutes until I had written a letter which I wished to send on board the ship. There was a female with the strangers, and upon one of her fingers I noticed a ring exactly similar to that which you had given me.”

She hesitated a moment, and then continued—

“ Captain Seymour, I know not if I wrong you, but I thought her another victim to your deceitful wiles. I resolved to write to my brother and to her—and I did write, and Zuleika gave the letters to the young woman, to be read when they got on board the frigate. I was nearly mad with excitement, and scarcely knew what I wrote ; but I sent the ring you gave me to my brother, and gave him to understand, in ambiguous language, that his sister had seen him. I also warned the young female of the deceitful part that I believed you were acting. But,” she added, “ why am I telling this to you ? How can it concern you ?”

“ It does concern me, Miss Miller, inasmuch as you have explained a mystery which I could not otherwise have solved. In the first place I tell you solemnly, that I did not give the ring you speak of to the young lady whom I met at your mother's cottage in New Jersey. Again, your mother wears a ring exactly similar to that which I gave you, which was taken from the person of a female who was found drowned in the river shortly after your disappearance from home. The body had been so long in the water that the features could not be recognized ; but your mother recognized what she believed

to be the ring you had worn. She claimed the body as that of her daughter and had it decently interred, and she wears the ring in remembrance of you. It was that discovery which led her to believe that you were dead. Jane, your mother believes that you committed suicide, and she did believe that I was the cause of your committing the dreadful deed."

"My poor, poor mother!" said Jane, "how she must have suffered through my foolish—my insane imprudence; but the rings, Captain Seymour; how came the rings, so much alike, to be so widely distributed?"

"The jeweller of whom they were purchased in Boston, by different persons, of course, had several of a similar make, although he professed to have but one, and obtained a high price for them all, in consequence of their singular and antique appearance. A series of remarkable coincidences has brought the wearers, at different times, together, and led to many strange and startling incidents, which it is unnecessary for me to speak of now. Your brother, however," and Captain Seymour smiled as he spoke, "your brother believed that the Island of Annabon was enchanted, and that Zuleika was an African Ariel, and that the ring was spirited away from him, until Miss Herbert (that was the name of the lady who visited the island with Captain P——, and your brother) informed him that she had taken the ring from the till of his chest, when about leaving the G—— to return to New York—believing it, at the time, to have been her own."

"My dear brother!" said Jane, "no wonder he was mystified; for I was in such a state of excitement that I daresay the letters I wrote seemed to have been written by a maniac."

"That was what Miss Herbert thought," replied Seymour, "but she and your brother were mystified by the evident knowledge you had of their family affairs, though your remarks were mixed up with so much that was contradictory and absurd. However, to increase the puzzle, they believed the letters to have been written by Zuleika, and your brother indignantly denied that she was his sister; unless, indeed, as I before hinted, she was under the power of enchantment. Neither, until I recognized you yesterday, could I understand anything of the matter. It was as great a mystery to me, as to the rest, when I heard in your mother's house, from the lips of your brother and Miss Herbert, that Zuleika, as they asserted, had been guilty of such mischievous and strange

pranks—for I had no suspicion that Harry Davis was my old acquaintance, Jane Miller.”

Sad and heavy as was the heart of Jane, she could not forbear smiling as she listened to the mystifications which her letters had given rise to.

Seymour proceeded :

“ You will now wish to leave us, Miss Miller. I shall in a few months, perhaps in the course of a few weeks, leave this place with Zuleika ; I intend to travel on the European Continent ; until then, stay with us—write to your mother in the meantime, and when Zuleika and I leave the island, you shall accompany us to France, and I will thence procure you a passage to New York.”

“ I thank you ; perhaps it is better that I should wait, than leave immediately—I long, oh, how much ! to see my mother and brother again, and yet I dread the ordeal of curiosity, perhaps scorn and contempt, that I must pass through.”

“ You should not let that fancy trouble your mind,” replied Seymour. “ Believe me, you will meet with a happy reception at home. Why need you care what strangers think or say ? At all events those whose praise or censure is alone worth a thought, will pity rather than condemn.”

“ Oh, pity ! that were worse than all ; I could endure scorn and contempt because I could meet those who looked upon me with those feelings, with their own weapons ; but pity ! no, I could not endure pity.”

“ You are excited, Miss Miller,” said Seymour ; “ you distress yourself more than there is occasion for. I will leave you and return to Zuleika, who will be expecting me and wondering what it is that keeps me so long absent from her. Compose yourself—and then let me beg of you to join us—I am going to take Zuleika out on the bay in the felucca.”

Seymour returned to the cottage and joined Zuleika, who, as he had expected, was wondering what so long detained him from her side. She was nursing her infant, whom, with a mother's pride, she had attired in its gayest clothing, and the little creature was jumping and kicking, and crowing and throwing its little fat arms about, in all the exuberance of infantile delight, and she smiled upon her father as he entered the room. “ Does she not look pretty, George ?” asked Zuleika. “ Now see, as she smiles, is she not like you. She certainly is the very best and prettiest baby in the world.”

“ Then of course she must be like her father, dear,” smiling-

ly replied Seymour. "Certainly if you think she is, I am in duty bound to think so too," and he took the infant in his arms and danced it up and down for some minutes until the little creature began to cry and to hold out its arms towards its mother. "There take your baby, Zuleika," said Seymour, as, kissing the infant's brow, he placed it in her lap, and then, seating himself beside her, bestowed a still fonder embrace upon her.

"Where have you been wandering so long this morning, George?" enquired Zuleika, and Seymour related to her the conversation that had passed between him and Jane Miller.

"Poor thing!" said Zuleika, pityingly, when he had concluded his narration. "Her's is a hard fate. It must be a dreadful thing to love and not be loved again, above all, when the affections are fixed on one, so noble, so true as you, dear George." And she rested her hand upon her husband's shoulder and gazed earnestly into his face, her dark eyes beaming with love and pride. An ice bolt seemed to pierce the heart of Seymour—"so noble and true" he mentally exclaimed. "Oh Zuleika, may the fates never allow your innocent soul to be disabused of that impression—would to God that a happier destiny, or I should say, rather, a less impetuous temper and a less obstinate will had been bestowed on me, and then, with your love to be my guiding star, I might have been all you believe me to be."

"You look pale and dull, dear," said Zuleika, noticing the gloom that had cast its shadow over her husband's handsome features, "are you not well?" "Yes, quite well, darling," he replied with forced gaiety, "come let the nurse put baby to sleep—and then we will seek Jane and take a sail on the bay."

"Oh, that will be delightful," replied Zuleika, as, calling the nurse, she resigned the infant to her charge, and hastened to prepare herself for the sail.

* * * * *

There were others who had witnessed the meeting of Seymour and Zuleika, besides those of the household, whom we have named. Marca, now a privileged visitor of the nurse, Julia, had gazed upon the scene, and her aged and scared heart had softened as she witnessed the tenderness with which Seymour embraced his wife and child, and the mingled feelings of love and pride and devotion with which the young wife and mother had presented the infant to its father, and then, like a simple, trusting child, had seated herself upon his knee, cling-

ing to him, as to her every hope and stay, and twining her arms around him as the vine entwines its tendrils around the sturdy oak—and *she*, had she been left to herself, would have foregone her plans of vengeance upon the devoted offspring of the hated Vincenzo ; but there was still another, who, unseen herself, had seen this happy meeting, and she had felt all her evil passions the more strongly aroused as she witnessed the ebullitions of love that cruel fate had debarred her from indulging in. Her heart was ardent as the sun that shines o'er her native isles. She *could* have loved with a passion that would have devoured itself with its own intensity. Her love would have resembled that of the tigress for its young—it did resemble it so far as regarded her own son Abdallah ; but it was a love to shrink from and to be dreaded—for it would have been fraught with danger to its object. The boiling lava, in the heart of Vesuvius, clothes with everlasting fertility the glowing mountain-side ; but who knows the moment when the volcano will break forth in fury, and spread devastation and ruin upon all that it has fostered and nurtured with its previous kindly warmth ; and her hate ! her hate was akin to her love ! It knew no softening ; it yielded to no emotions of pity ; it burned with the fury of the fire of Hades in her bosom, consuming herself and all upon whom she bestowed it.

The two women—mother and daughter, met at a late hour of the evening, upon the seashore—and, at the moment when Zuleika was seated in child-like confidence, upon her husband's knee, forgetful of the sorrows of the past—hopeful of the joys that fancy, aided by love, depicted in the future ; a plot was maturing which was to doom that young, trusting heart to sorrow, to despair, to — ; but we will not anticipate. Enough, is it not enough for us to say at present that Zoe had sent to her son Abdallah, and he was shortly to meet her at Lemnos, and then she hoped for the successful consummation of a plot which she had arranged, which should serve alike to satiate her vengeance, and to place her discarded son in the position she deemed it right he should occupy.

“ And you are resolved, then, Zoe,” said Marca, as they were about to part : “ the sight of the young, innocent mother, so happy to be reunited to her husband—so proud of the babe she has borne him, has not had power to stay your designs ? ”

“ Never, never,” replied Zoe, firmly ; “ it has but added fresh fuel to my hatred. It is useless to think to turn me from the path I have marked out. You are old and dolted, mother :

age has chilled the once hot blood in your veins, and you have ceased to feel the craving for vengeance."

So saying, without deigning to listen to the ancient sybil, who again essayed to speak, Zoe turned haughtily away, and guided by the pure, soft light of the moon, sought the cave where she made her home, when on Zuleika's Isle; while Mar-ca, muttering to herself as she walked along, retired to the hut a short distance from Seymour's cottage, in which she had of late taken up her abode.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Marie makes her Escape from her Guardian, and is Rescued by Captain de Sylva.

THE anger and vexation of Mr. Wilson, when he found that all his interested hopes were frustrated by the unfortunate discovery of the marriage of Charles Mordant with Jeannette Dixon, knew no bounds; but upon the unfortunate Marie was it chiefly visited.

The poor girl was closely confined to her room for several days, her meals being brought to her by her uncle—who never deigned to speak to her—and she began to fear that her reason was tottering. There seemed to be no hope left to her, for no answer was returned by Mr. Wilson to her repeated requests that he would allow her to leave his house, and endeavor to earn her own living by making use of the various accomplishments she was mistress of. He seemed resolved to drive her to insanity.

One day, however, he came to her apartment. There was a sterner expression than usual on his always stern countenance, and although Marie was possessed of considerable spirit, she was so prostrated by the effects of the solitary confinement to which she had been subjected, that she quailed before her jailor, and, without speaking a word, sat tremblingly waiting to hear what had led him to pay her this unexpected visit.

"Marie," said Mr. Wilson, after having sat for some time in silence, "you have given me such sufficient proof of your obstinacy and determination to oppose my reasonable desires to benefit you as well as myself, that it must be evident to you that I can have no further desire to raise you from the position

in which your unfortunate birth has placed you. I have told you—you have compelled me to do so—that you are my slave. Actuated by feelings of pity for your youth, and your ignorance of the secret of your birth, in which ignorance you have been educated by the ill-judged partiality of my brother. I would have hidden your degradation from you, and have wedded you to a worthy young man, and to myself alone would the secret of your birth have been known. By your delay—your obstinacy, you have rendered this marriage impracticable—impossible; and you cannot deny that you have brought upon your own head the fate that awaits you——”

“The fate that awaits me, uncle! What can you mean?” exclaimed the poor girl, in a terrified tone of voice. “Surely you would not have wished to have seen me wedded to a man like that vile Mr. Mordant—a man who has already been married. Good God! utter, everlasting misery had been mine, had I unhappily become his wife.”

“And who, girl, would have known that he had been vilely entrapped into marriage by that wretched woman who I foolishly engaged as your governess, had not your own obstinacy brought about a *dénoûement*, which you will suffer for as long as you live.”

“Would the crime have been less in the eyes of the world, would my misery have been less,” answered Marie, “if at some future day I had discovered the dreadful secret? No, uncle, do what you will with me; alas! I cannot help myself; but I shall ever be thankful that a fortunate chain of circumstances has led to the discovery which has saved me from becoming the wife of a villain.”

“Be it so, poor girl,” said Mr. Wilson, his passion now thoroughly aroused, “you have said enough; I would have saved you; you have chosen your own path. My own interests will not suffer me to dally with you any longer. To-morrow Mr. Howell will be here; he has purchased several of my field hands, and will take them with him to Texas, where he has purchased a large plantation. Howell has often expressed his admiration of you. He will take you with him to superintend his household; in fact, to be to all intents and purposes—his—his wife. He has paid a large sum of money for you, which will help partially to remunerate me for the expense to which I have been subjected in educating and fitting you to shine in a sphere from which you have wantonly shut yourself out. It now depends upon yourself whether you will be happy or not.

Howell is a good, clever man, and, if you behave well, will treat you well; but, hear me, girl; if you show the airs you have hitherto done—twelve months hence you will be picking cotton among the field hands on his plantation. Howell is not a man to be trifled with."

The planter was proceeding with his advice, when, looking at the fragile object of his persecution, he observed that she had swooned away, and rising from his seat, he left the room, and sent a negress attendant to wait upon her, and endeavor to recover her.

The man Howell, to whom Wilson had sold Marie, was a coarse grained, brutal wretch, who had often visited Mr. Wilson's plantation, and had frequently expressed his sensual admiration of Marie; he was held in detestation and terror by both her and her sister Louise. She would have preferred death—a thousand deaths—rather than have fallen into his hands.

The negress entered the room, and applying burnt feathers and all the various appliances supposed from time to time to be efficacious in cases of fainting, she soon restored the poor girl to her senses, and a violent flood of tears happily came to her relief, or probably her brain would have given way beneath the pressure of her distress. The negress had been an old servant of her father's, and had attended upon the young ladies from the period of their earliest infancy, until she with them was transferred to Mr. Wilson, on the death of his brother. She was acquainted with the dark secret of Marie's birth, but knowing that her father had made no difference with regard to the treatment of his children, she had been taught to treat them both with equal respect, and had become strongly attached to them.

"Cry, Missey, cry," said she; "dem tears will do you a mighty deal o' good. I know what Massa Wilson be a gwine to do with you. Lor bress your pretty face, it is a mortal shame. If you was a brack nigger it would be different; but to sell you to dat villain, Massa Howell—golly! it is too bad. S'pose your poor fader seed it, he would jump up from his grave, and haunt Massa Wilson—it is a shame, Missey Marie," and the poor negress began to weep in sympathy.

"You cannot aid me, good Laura," said Marie, "but I know you are sorry for me. Cannot you let my sister Louise come to me?"

"Oh Missey, s'pose Massa Wilson know'd dat, he would kick up a fine bobbery, and sell me right off. Oh, he is a

dreadful man when him blood is up. He say dat no pussen mus' see you but me till Massa Howell comes to-morrow."

"Then God alone can help me," said Marie, again showing symptoms of fainting.

"Poor child!" said the compassionate negress, "it be a mortal shame—golly! let Massa do what he likes, I *will* let Missey Louise come up—golly! I will. Come, cheer up, Missey Marie," she continued, addressing the half unconscious girl. "Missey Louise is crying to see you dese tree days, an' I will send her to you spite ob ole Massa Wilson—de ole toad!" and the negress ground her teeth as she spoke, and immediately leaving the room, went in search of Louise.

In the course of a few minutes, the younger sister entered the room, and throwing herself into Marie's arms, she said.

"My dear sister, I know all; I would have come to you before, but I could not. Oh, Marie, what will become of you?—and I—I shall die when you are gone away and are delivered over to such a fate! I shudder to think of it. I wish uncle Wilson and Mr. Howell would both die to-night, right off, I'm sure I do—and then, Marie, you should'nt be taken away. We'd both live together always."

Marie locked her sister in her embrace, and for several minutes the two girls mingled their tears together. At length Marie composed herself. She felt that now was the hour for action, or else all was lost.

"Louise," said she, "I will die sooner than suffer myself to be carried away by that wretch, Howell; I will escape from this house to-night, if you will aid me. You, dear Louise, can obtain the keys for me, and when uncle has retired, I will go forth; the cold charity of the streets were preferable to this abode."

"But, Marie, darling, you will be missed and captured; and then a worse fate will await you than that which now threatens you."

"Captured! never alive!" passionately exclaimed Marie; and, as she spoke, she drew a knife from her bosom: "I have resolved rather to die, Louise, than to fall into the hands of that detestable man; if you can get me the keys, do: if not, to-morrow morning shall see me a corpse—nay, give the alarm, and I will kill myself before your eyes."

"I give the alarm! I betray you, Marie!" said Louise, "never; I would myself sooner die than become the mistress of Howell. I will get you the keys, Marie, at any risk, if I

can ; and, my dear sister, God bless and save you. I must go now, for uncle will be calling for me at eight o'clock ;" and, clasping her sister in her embrace, and bestowing upon her a score of kisses, which were passionately returned, she left the room.

The hours passed away slowly ; until at length, the hour of midnight struck from the hall clock. A solemn silence prevailed throughout the house, but out of doors the rain was falling heavily, and the wind was howling mournfully ; a storm had set in early in the evening, which had continued to increase in violence. Marie had given up all hopes of receiving aid from her sister, and she had drawn the dirk-knife from the folds of her dress, and sat gazing strangely and intently on the keen, glittering blade. There was a slight sound, as of some one moving stealthily along the passage, in bare feet. A key was cautiously fitted into the keyhole of the door of Marie's prison-chamber, and in another moment it was turned, and the door being cautiously opened, displayed Louise attired in her night-clothes, her face pallid with emotion and fear, but carrying in her hand the key of the street door.

She started, and an exclamation that would have alarmed the house, almost burst from her lips, as she saw her sister looking so earnestly—so strangely upon the weapon she held in her hand ; but the sound of her entrance had aroused Marie from her reverie, and as she looked at her sister Louise, the latter became reassured. She advanced to her sister.

" Marie," she whispered, " I have stolen into our uncle's room and have taken this key from his pockets, while he lay sleeping. Hasten, darling—hasten to fly—for I must see you off and restore the key before he awakes. But, oh ! it is an awful night on which to be abroad !"

Marie smiled a ghastly smile. " What is the rage of the elements, Louise," she said ; " what is death itself, in any shape, compared to the horror of the fate that awaits me if I remain here ? Give me the key, dear, and Heaven bless you, and preserve you from the wretchedness that has befallen your sister."

She kissed Louise, and took the key from her trembling hand. Marie was calm and self-composed. Her nerves were strung to the utmost tension.

" But you have no money, Marie ?" said Louise.

" But little," replied Marie. " But I need not that——"

"I have thought of it, and have brought you my little store; take it, Marie, for my sake."

It was no time for words. Marie took the proffered purse and placed it in her pocket, and then, embracing Louise, she said :

"Farewell, dearest sister, for the present. We may never meet again on earth ! but I trust we shall meet in Heaven—"

In the course of a few minutes more Marie was in the dark and desolate streets, exposed to the fury of the pitiless storm ; and Louise had returned the key to her uncle's pocket without awakening him. Then she retired to her own room to weep and pray for her unfortunate sister.

When Marie had reached the street, she mechanically bent her steps towards the Levee. She had no motive in going thither. She had not thought of any plan of action. Her whole soul had been engrossed with the desire to escape anyhow, anywhere, out of the house of Mr. Wilson. Now she strove to gather her scattered thoughts and to form some plan how to proceed, but the more she thought, the less did she seem likely to resolve upon any definite system of action. Meanwhile the drenching rain had wetted her to the skin, and the cold winds had chilled her frame to the very marrow of her bones. She wandered from street to street, as one crazy—always holding in her hand the friendly dagger which she resolved should end her misery ere morning light, if Heaven had forsaken her, as it appeared to have done.

The clock struck the hour of three. For nearly three hours she had been wandering amidst the storm in the drenching rain, through the deserted streets. She felt her strength failing her ; and, at the termination of a street leading on to the Levee, she sank exhausted upon the door step of an hotel.

The door was opened, and a man stepped out, having been conducted to the door by a friend, with whom, it appeared, he had been spending the evening, far into the night.

"Good night, captain ; or, rather, I should say, good morning," said the man inside. "You have a dirty night to find your way on board in—take care of yourself. I am going to turn in, for I feel devilish tired and sleepy ; and by the time I wake in the morning, I suppose you will be far off at sea."

"Yes," returned the other, speaking in a foreign accent, "de wind is fair, although it is stormy ; I sall get under weigh

directly I get on board. De pilot will be ready at day-break."

And, with another mutual good night, and good bye, the door was closed, and the stranger addressed as captain endeavored to pick his way down the steps. In so doing he came in contact with the almost insensate form of the hapless Marie.

"*Caramba !* vat is dis ?" said he, "A voman in de streets in such a night as dis—in all dis rain—poor ting ! Some unfortunate creature, I suppose, who has got no home ; but she sall die if she stay here trough de night."

And he addressed her in his broken English, asking who she was, and what had brought her to that desperate straight.

Awakened to her senses by the compassionate tones of the stranger's voice, the young girl endeavored to rise, and exclaimed—

"Oh, sir ! whoever you are, help me now in the hour of my distress."

"But vat is de matter ?" said the stranger, evidently softened by the young woman's earnest appeal, and struck by the lady-like tone of her voice. "You is not—vat sall I say ? *Caramba !* I sall speak not a little too much English. You is a lady ?"

"I am an unfortunate woman who needs your help, whoever you be," replied Marie.

"Can you speak de Portuguese ?" asked the stranger.

"No, sir ! no !" replied Marie.

"De *Espanol* ?"

"No."

"De French, den. Oh, yes ; you is a lady—you sall *parlez Francais* ?"

"*Oui, Monsieur, je parle Francais ; par l'amour de Dieu prenez pitie de moi,*" said Marie, speaking in French.

"Then come away from this place," said the stranger, speaking fluently in the same language. "Stay, will you come on board my ship—my brig, I should say ; you say you have no home ; it is not a fine abode for a lady, but my cabin is better than the streets in this storm."

The voice of the stranger was so gentle, that the unhappy girl—glad to find a friend in any human being—trusted herself to his guidance ; and carefully and politely, as though she had been clad in silks and satins, and promenading the most

fashionable streets in broad daylight, he led her to his vessel ; and having carried her on board, and placed her on a sofa in the cabin, where a bright fire was burning, he asked her to tell him her story and say how he could further aid her.

Marie told her sad tale with an eloquence and feeling that touched the honest sailor's heart. He was a young and handsome man, and the expression of his countenance, though jovial and careless, was indicative of a generous disposition.

"I will help you so far as I can, so may God help me, lady," he said, when she had concluded her narrative. "I am going to sea so soon as it is daylight. Can you trust yourself with me? If so—in a few hours you will be safe from pursuit—I am bound hence to Odessa—although by brig belongs to Lisbon. You shall go with me to Odessa, and when I return home to Lisbon I will introduce you to my father and mother? poor lady—they will pity and help you. But I leave it to you to say whether you will trust yourself with me."

"I will," replied Marie, as she looked into the ingenuous countenance of the young sailor. "You will not betray or deceive me?"

"No, lady, never. Dom Sebastian de Sylva has never yet deceived any one who trusted in his honor. He will not betray that honor now by deceiving a woman in distress. I have known misfortune, myself, lady," he continued, "and can sympathize with it in others ; but the day is breaking and I hear the voice of the pilot—sit here and dry your clothing; my duties call me on deck, in a few hours you will be far removed from that villain, your uncle, of whom you speak;" and leaving Marie in the cabin he ascended to the deck—having first ordered the steward to procure her coffee and such refreshments as she needed.

By eight o'clock the storm had cleared up, and the Petrel, Dom Sebastian's new brig, was standing out to sea, under a press of canvas, and when this was reported to Marie by the young seaman, she raised her hands and thanked God, and him, His instrument, who had thus, almost miraculously, delivered her from her persecutors.

In the morning, just as the white topsails of the Petrel were fading from the sight of those who were watching her from the Levee, Mr. Wilson rose from his bed, and soon afterwards he went to Marie's room, to take her her breakfast.

To his astonishment, the prisoner had flown. How, he knew not. She could not have escaped from the windows, and yet the doors were locked and the keys were in his possession.

Raging with impotent fury, he called up the domestics and questioned them, but without success; and he was obliged to put up with his disappointment in the best way he could.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The reader is introduced to Abdallah, the Greek Pirate Chief—the interview between Abdallah and Zoe.

“His robe of pride was thrown aside,
His brow no high-crowned turban bore,
But in its stead a shawl of red
Wreathed lightly round, his temples wore;
That dagger on whose hilt the gem
Were worthy of a diadem,
No longer glittered at his waist,
Where pistols, unadorned, were braced,
And from his belt a sabre swung,
And from his shoulder loosely hung
The cloak of white, the thin cassote
That decks the wandering Candiot;
Beneath his golden-plated vest
Clung like a cuirass to his breast;
The greaves below his knee that wound
With silvery scales were sheathed and bound;
But were it not that high command
Spake in his eye, and tone, and hand,
All that a careless eye could see
In him, was some young Galliongee.”

BRIDE OF ABYDOS.

A SMALL fleet of galleys, feluccas, and row-boats of quaint construction, lay at anchor off a narrow inlet of the Isle of Samos, near the coast of Asiatic Turkey, at the period of Seymour's return to Zuleika's Isle. The portion of the island off which these vessels were anchored was uninhabited, or rather, we should say, was only visited at intervals by a horde of Greek pirates, who had made this spot one of their rendezvous. A few days after Zoe had declared her intention to Marca not to forego her schemes of vengeance, several groups of men dressed in the picturesque dress of the Albanians, diversified in some degree with a quaint mixture of nautical attire, were strolling on the beach watching the vessels, or lounging on the green sward beyond, and indulging in the luxury of the narghilly.

To an artist the scene would have appeared fraught with every requisite to form a picture of romantic beauty. The dress of the men, who might have been some fifty in number, consisted of bright-hued, short jackets, fitting closely to their forms, beneath which a broad, black leather belt stuck full of

pistols, and from which a sabre depended, was bound around their waists, supporting their white, kilt-like breeches which reached barely to the knee, displaying their muscular, well-formed nether limbs, encased in scarlet embroidered leggings, while their long, black locks hanging loosely over their shoulders were surmounted with scarlet woollen caps, the tassels of which hung jauntily on one side. A smooth, level, sandy beach formed the landing place of the inlet, although on both sides, at no great distance, the surf beat violently upon the coast, which, except in this one spot, appeared to be rock-bound. This, with the sea glittering like polished silver in the bright sunshine, its gently heaving bosom being studded with the fleet of small vessels already mentioned, constituted the foreground of the picture; the background consisted of well-wooded hills, rising gradually inland towards the centre of the island, rich in luxuriant, but somewhat sombre foliage, and from amongst the trees peeped rude, simply constructed huts, used as sleeping places by the temporary visitors, while overhead the sky formed a canopy, unclouded, and almost too dazzling to gaze upon, so deep and clear was the cerulean hue, peculiar to the atmosphere of the Orient; but apart from an artistic view, the stranger would not have chosen to have found himself suddenly placed in contact with those lawless looking men, whose bronzed features and darkly bearded and moustached visages, upon which exposure and debauchery, and recklessness and ferocity had each set their indelible seal, marked them as men with whom it was dangerous to trifle.

* * * * *

"Paulo," said one of a group who had been for some time earnestly conversing together; "our captain often makes a confidant of you. Do you know why our fleet has been ordered from the Hellespont to meet here, on so sudden a notice?"

"Not I, Marco. Not I," replied the man addressed as Paulo, who was more aged than most of the party, and whose somewhat richer attire denoted that he held rank amongst that lawless band. "Not I," he repeated. "Giorgio makes a confidant of me; say you? The boy might well do so, for I have trained him from a child; but, *Corpo di Bacco!* he only tells me what he pleases; and I cannot ask him to tell me more out of idle curiosity."

"The boy!" exclaimed another of the group. "If he were here, and heard you speak of him thus slightly, even your

gray beard would not protect you from his anger. Paulo, Giorgio must now be thirty years of age."

"And if he be, still he is a boy to me, who have nursed him in my arms, and then I was no youngling."

"Truly you bear your years well, old Paulo," said Marco; "but how is it that our captain is called Giorgio! He was always known to me, before I joined his service, as Abdallah."

"Of a truth, Marco," replied Paulo, "it is evident that you have only lately joined our band, or you would know more of our brave captain's history. His name is Abdallah—at least that name was given him in childhood by his father, the old tyrant Vincenzo, who was a renegade from his kindred, even to his religion; but the youth was discarded by him when he took to his harem a younger mistress to supplant Zoe, who had for years reigned over it; and, when he grew towards manhood, he abjured the religion of Mahommed and the name of Abdallah—though he is still often designated by it—and took the Greek name of Giorgio. Had he his rights, he would now rule over many of these islands. And yet he may. I have a notion that he has some desperate scheme on hand; and for the consummation of that scheme we have been ordered to quit our safe anchorage in the Hellespont, and have been dispatched here."

"And where now is Giorgio?"

"Keep a still tongue in your head, if you be wise. He will shortly return. It is now nearly a week past since he sailed to the northern islands; and he said that at about the expiration of that period he would be back again. Ha! what is that?" For, even while Paulo was speaking, a white sail glittered in the distant horizon. "Fetch the spy-glass from my hat, Marco—the long glass, that we lately took from the French brig. It was worth all the rest of the booty; for it has the longest range of any glass I have ever taken from ship of Frank or Moslem. Hasten, Marco. If that be our captain, it is well; otherwise, we must prepare ourselves for whatever adventure is about to befall us."

Marco brought the glass, and Paulo, adjusting the focus, applied it to his eye, and gazed long and intently in the direction of the sail.

"*Corpo di Bacco!*" he exclaimed, at length, using a favorite oath, as he lowered the glass. "Unless my old eyes have

deceived me, that is Giorgio's bark !" And he again raised the glass to his eye.

"It is he. It is he," he said, as he removed it again. "Now would I wager a Turkish piastre to a broad piece of Spain that we have stirring times on hand. It is well, for our joints have grown stiff and our arms rusty of late."

The glass was passed from hand to hand, and all the more experienced amongst the assemblage declared the strange sail though still at a great distance, to be the felucca of their captain.

Within an hour the swift-sailing vessel had reached the roadstead and cast anchor, and a boat left the side and was sculled rapidly towards the shore by a Greek sailor. There were two others in the little boat, one of whom the expectant group on shore had no difficulty in recognizing as their captain, for his tall martial form was readily distinguishable ; but the other figure was wrapped in a large boat cloak so completely as to render the form and even the stature of the wearer indistinct. The boat touched the sandy beach, and in an instant a dozen obsequious hands were stretched out to drag it up high and dry beyond the reach of the advancing and receding waves, and a shout from the united voices of all the assemblage rent the air in greeting to their chief. Giorgio, or Abdallah—as, excepting among his own seamen, he was generally called—sprang lightly on shore, and then hastily returning the salutation of the sailors, he extended his hand to his companion, who also sprang from the boat, with every evidence of vigor and elasticity. In springing, however, the cloak fell from her shoulders, and displayed to the wondering seamen the tall figure of Zoe—the mother of Giorgio. Leading Zoe by the hand, Giorgio advanced to his men, who had drawn themselves up in line, in obedience to the command of Paulo, and formally presented his mother to them, bidding them acknowledge her as their sovereign mistress. A second cheer in honor of the mother of their captain was their reply to this, and then loosening the hand of Zoe, Giorgio stepped up to Paulo, and calling him one side, entered earnestly into conversation with him.

While this conversation is going forward, let us attempt to describe the person and appearance of Giorgio, with whom, under the name of Abdallah, the reader is already in some degree familiar.

He was still a young man, although his appearance beto-

kened a greater number of years than had been accorded to him by Paulo ; but this appearance of greater age might have been caused by the hardships and exposures to which he had been subjected from childhood. He was tall, erect, and strikingly handsome. His features, but for their bronzed complexion, might have been accounted feminine, but this failing was removed by their stern expression, and by the jet-black hair, moustache, and beard which adorned his face. He very much resembled Zoe, although the malignant passions which marred the beauty of the latter, and which a constant brooding over her smothered desire for complete and thorough vengeance had indelibly stamped upon her countenance, were wanting in the expression of her son's face, which was chiefly noticeable for an appearance of reckless courage and stern will. Giorgio was attired after the fashion of the sailors who owned his sway—his clothing, although fashioned of better material than their's, being devoid of all ornament. He wore the scarlet cap, the embroidered worsted jacket, the white kilt-like breeches, and the scarlet leggings of an Albanian warrior, and in the belt that encircled his waist were stuck a pair of long-barreled pistols, while at his side hung a crooked Turkish scimitar, unsheathed. This, however, was not his usual attire, for, when not arrayed in fighting costume, he was accustomed to wear the garb of a Moslem of high rank, and the handles of his pistols and the hilt of his sabre were, when in this costume, mounted with gold, and studded with rare and valuable gems. Though but the captain of a horde of pirates, he claimed the rank of a chieftain of the *Ægean* Islands, in virtue of his descent, and on that account, when in gala costume, he still wore the distinctive garb of a Mussulman of rank—his father, Vincenzo, having been a renegade from the faith of his ancestors, though the son had abjured the Moslem faith, and nominally (at least it was but little else) had re-adopted the religion of his fathers.

It was sufficient for his followers to see him in the garb he now wore to satisfy them that the prediction of Paulo was correct, and that their chief was bound in some adventurous exploit.

While Giorgio and Paulo, who was his second in command, were engaged in conversation, Zoe stood scanning, with a curious eye, the fierce followers of her son, and an expression of well-satisfied pride gleamed over her handsome though savage features, as she glanced at the muscular forms and hardened

lineaments of the men who stood submissively before her. * * * * *

Giorgio and Paulo still paraded slowly to and fro on the sandy beach.

"And when will the attack be made?" enquired Paulo of his chief.

"Within a few days: as soon as I can marshal all my strength and reach the Bay of Salonica with my fleet. Mohammed Islam, he who my cursed parent Vincenzo, leagued with to effect the destruction of Arnault, has now a small government on the coast of that bay, at Tschcran-Olstock. He has long been absent in the interior of the empire; but our vengeance has not slept during these years of absence, nor have we forgotten or forgiven his perfidy. Paulo, he must perish with his guards. He has abundance of spoil and many wives and concubines; these latter must be ours. We will make the pampered women of the haughty Mohammed Islam toil as our slaves, or dispose of them to others for gold, and his wealth shall go to increase our store. But I have another object in view in this expedition; there lies at the entrance of the Bay of Salonica a small island upon which a daughter of Vincenzo has taken up her abode. She is the wife of a Frank, who has made the island his home. She is a sister of mine, but I disclaim all ties which would bind me to Vincenzo. I have promised my mother to seize her that she may be sold to the Turk, and this duty I take upon myself. To you, therefore, after our fleet has reached that island will I entrust its command, until I rejoin you. With my own felucca and its trusty and well-tried crew, shall I be enabled to effect my purpose—to seize Vincenzo's daughter and to make a prisoner of her husband: to slay him if he is fool-hardy enough to offer resistance. Now go, brave Paulo, and impart to my followers the design I have in view; get all ready for sea with the utmost dispatch. I must rejoin my mother."

The chief turned away and retraced his steps to the spot where he had left Zoe, where she was still standing, alone; for the seamen had separated and wandered to the beach, where they were joined by Paulo, who, assembling them together, gave them such information as he thought fit with regard to the projected expedition; and then, accustomed to prompt obedience, they commenced with alacrity, immediately to prepare the vessels for sea.

* * * * *

"And who, mother, is the husband of Bedita, this sister of mine, though she does not call you mother?" enquired Giorgio.

"A Frank from far across the western waters, my son," replied Zoe. "You recollect the young man who, while you were yourself but a youth, although then you had command of these brave followers, engaged in your service, and was prominent on account of his reckless daring—and at times, when heated in the affray, for his ferocity?"

"I do; but I thought he was slain when reverses temporarily befell us and our stronghold was broken up."

"He was not slain. Where he has since been I know not; enough, that he has possessed himself of wealth, and has wedded Bedita, or Zuleika as he has chosen to call her. I recognized, then, in the daring pirate, the youth who but a short time before had purchased Bedita of me, in the slave mart at Stamboul; but he seldom saw, and did not recognize me. He had paid me well for the child. She was then but an infant, and although she gave promise of exceeding beauty would have fetched but little in the market. I thought he had in his turn disposed of her to advantage, and I heeded not her fate. But, I cannot—will not allow her to reside in peace among these Islands, where, with my consent, none of the progeny of Vincenzo, save you, my own son, shall set their footsteps."

"Is Bedita, then, so very beautiful?" asked the pirate chief.

"She is beautiful as the almond blossom in early spring," replied Zoe, speaking in the figurative language peculiar to the East.

The young man did not immediately reply, but his features assumed a thoughtful expression. In a few minutes, however, he continued:

"And the Frank was a brave and gallant youth. I would not willingly that he should come to harm—perchance he would join our band; his bravery and skill would be valuable. I might offer him a command, and perhaps he would willingly consent to resign his bride; there are others as handsome as Bedita."

"Ah! my son," returned Zoe, "you know not these northern Franks. They are cold and passionless as the icicles of their native land. They feel little of the fire that scorches the blood of the sons and daughters of the East; but when their long dormant passions are aroused, they are more terrible than the lion of the forest, and they are true to the one woman they make their wife. To ask this man to resign Bedita, would be

to sting him to madness, for he doats upon her; and think not that he will listen to offers of compromise. No; no, the sand must drink up his heart's blood—and the dainty Bedita must become the inmate of a Turkish harem."

"Be it so, mother," replied Giorgio, "the vessels will sail to-night. Shall you accompany us?"

"I will. I must be present when Bedita and her infant are torn from the arms of the Frank husband and father. That hour will be the hour of my vengeance. It will then be satisfied."

The mother and son parted, Zoe retiring to Giorgio's hut, and the latter going towards the beach to superintend the preparations for the departure of his vessels.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Gale in the *Ægean Sea*—The meeting of De Sylva and Seymour—Zuleika begs her Husband to become a Christian—The Death of Zuleika and her Child.

"That fearful moment when he left the cave,
Thy heart grew chill;
He was thy hope—thy joy—thy love—thine *all*,
And that last thought on him, thou could'st not save,
Sufficed to kill;
Burst forth in one loud cry, and all was still."

Bride of Abydos.

"Wilt thou? I know thou wilt,
Thy silence speaks assent;
And in that pleasing hope
Thy Emma dies content."

A BRIG under close reefed topsails, her top-gallant masts struck, and jib-boom housed—the paint on her sides almost washed off—and her rigging whitened by being continually soaked with the spray that broke over it—was rolling heavily in the trough of the sea amongst the Islands of the Cyclades. Hers had been a perilous position; for some days past she was bound through the Dardanelles, when one of those gales, rare, but when they do blow, raging with great fury, had driven her out of her course—and for three days she had drifted amongst the "thousand islands" of the *Ægean Sea*, almost unmanageable, and liable at any moment to be dashed to pieces on some of the numerous rocky islets, or

stranded on the reefs and sand banks, that so abounded there. But the gale had reached its height, and had begun to subside. The wind had considerably decreased, and it now blew scarcely more than a strong top-gallant breeze; but the sea still rolled heavily—and the little vessel suffered all the more for want of sail to keep her steady, for her top-gallant masts had been sprung before they were struck—and all her sails were rent. She presented to the eye a picture of desolation. In fact, the scene was altogether of a gloomy, dismal character. The thick, misty, gray scud overhead, although the wind had abated, continued to drift rapidly. The disturbed waters which had for days dashed wildly against the rocks and sand-banks, had become impregnated with earthly sediment, and had changed their customary deep blue hue to that of a turgid yellow, and at intervals the wind rose in gusts and whistled shrilly through the bare rigging as though loth yet to conclude its wild carnival, while the gulls and other sea birds flew around in circles and shrieked discordantly, as if mocking or mourning—it seemed hard to tell which—the desolation of nature.

Wrapped in a pea-jacket, with a sou'wester on his head, tied tightly down beneath his chin, and his legs and feet encased in a pair of heavy sea-boots, into which his trousers were tucked, stood one who appeared to be the captain of the brig. He was peering intently and anxiously through the hazy atmosphere, steadying himself by holding firmly to the weather-main rigging, and by his side stood a seaman, whom, to judge from the frequency with which the captain turned and spoke to him—half in command, half as though asking advice—might be the officer second in command; and further off, near the companion-way, secured in a chair that was firmly lashed to the deck by the ring-bolts, was seated a female form, though her slight figure was so encumbered with heavy boat-cloaks, that it required a close scrutiny to distinguish her sex by her attire.

“The gale is now over, Pedro—and it is time,” said the captain, speaking in Portuguese, to his mate. “We must have been driven a long way out of our course. I wish it would clear up a little, so that we could ascertain where we are. We have been drifting to the westward ever since the breeze commenced, and I should judge that now we cannot be far off the Bay of Salonica. We want more sail set, though. Pedro, you had better set the carpenter to work at the spare

spars, and get up new top-gallant masts as quickly as possible."

"Every spar has been washed overboard with the long-boat, Senhor," replied the mate. "We haven't got a stick on board even to make a royal mast, let alone a top-gallant mast."

"Ha! that is unfortunate. We must get new spars, some way or other, before we enter the Dardanelles. It will never do to attempt to pass through that narrow channel with no power to set more sail than we now carry."

"I should think, Senhor, that it would not be difficult to procure spars from some of these islands. The Greeks would furnish them to us, I have no doubt, and cheap, too."

"Very likely; well thought of, Pedro. As soon as the weather clears up, and I think we shall catch a glimpse of the sun by noon, we will steer for the first island we see that looks sufficiently inviting. Let the reefs out of the topsails, Pedro, and hoist them up. Let us crowd as much sail on the brig as possible, for she is fairly becalmed in the trough of the sea; and it would be as well to get the guns up from the hold, the whole six of them, and see them put in order. These Greeks are ticklish customers to deal with. I don't suppose we shall have occasion to use them; but the appearance of being able to show fight often keeps one out of a row."

The mate left the side of his captain to execute the orders he had received; and the latter having apparently satisfied himself that he had plenty of sea-room for the present, left his position by the weather-main rigging, and drew near the companion-way.

"It has been a rough spell of weather, this, Mademoiselle Marie," said he, speaking cheerfully in the French language to the lady. "The *Ægean* Sea is generally calm and gentle; but when a gale does blow it blows to some purpose. I am glad to see you on deck. I have had little time or opportunity to speak to you since this infernal breeze commenced, for we have been in an unpleasant position here right among these islands. How have you borne it?"

"Oh, quite well, Captain De Sylva," replied Marie Wilson (the reader will have already perceived that it was she who had been addressed by the captain). "The cabin has been so close and the sea broke over the deck so wildly that I was fearful, if I had indeed been able, to leave the cabin; but the fresh air has quite revived me. It is a grand sight, this tumult-

tuous heaving of the waters, and how wild the sky still looks?"

"Yes, the sight is grand enough; but one has little time or inclination to admire its sublimity, locked up in a narrow sea like this, full of reefs and sandbanks. If it had been on the open ocean now, I then should have taken it easy, and should have brought you on deck to witness the effects of the gale when at its height. But I have not rested or closed my eyes these three days, and in such a case, when one's mind is anxious, being aware that hidden dangers are all around one, there is plenty to occupy the attention besides the sublimity of nature."

"You must be dreadfully fatigued, Captain De Sylva."

"A little. I shall be fatigued when I have time to rest; but the anxiety I have suffered has served to banish fatigue, while a cause for that anxiety lasted."

"We are safe now?" inquired Marie.

"I hope so. The gale is over, and I expect the weather will shortly clear, and then we shall sight some of the islands, and learn our exact position. You will have an opportunity, Mademoiselle, of going on shore and looking about you, for I find I shall have to go into the first haven that offers to obtain some new spars."

"That will be delightful!" exclaimed Marie, and then she choked herself, adding, "but how foolish I am. If it will be delightful to me, I suppose it will considerably delay your voyage?"

"It does not much matter," replied the captain. "I am accustomed to take such things easy, and make my time my own, and consequently the delay will not annoy me as it would one who was anxious to make a rapid voyage—still I grant I am sailor enough to feel every delay that I don't bring about at my own pleasure an annoyance."

"When shall we reach Odessa?" enquired Marie.

"That, lady, it is impossible for me to say; but, if we succeed in getting the spars we need, and the wind proves favorable for our passage through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, we may be there in a fortnight."

At this moment the sun shone out from the murky clouds, dissolving the mist, as by enchantment, and altogether changing the aspect of nature. "Thank heaven! there is the sun again," exclaimed De Sylva.

"The blessed sun!" exclaimed Marie; and, as if a simulta-

neous feeling of delight had seized the entire crew at the sight of the glorious luminary that for three days had been hidden from them, every eye was cast aloft—on every face beamed a smile of satisfaction.

"Aloft there!" shouted the captain, in Portuguese, to the men who were busied shaking out the reefs from the main top-sail. "Do you see land any where—the mist has cleared away?"

"Land on the weather bow!" sung out the man at the weather earing of the topsail.

"Land on the lee bow!" sung out a seaman from the leeward-arm.

"By heaven!" exclaimed the captain, "we must be well up the Bay of Salonica—much further than I thought. It is lucky the gale has broken or we should have been ashore on the Turkish coast. Brace up the yards close," he continued; "lay down from aloft, men, and trim sails."

The men crowded down from the rigging, and for a few minutes all was hurry and bustle—to the eye of a landsman all would have been confusion.

The brig was put on another course; the topsails were hoisted, and again a man was sent aloft to ascertain whether any of the islands were in sight.

"There is a group of small islands away to leeward," shouted the seaman, from aloft.

"Can you make them out clearly, my man?" asked the captain. "Be sure they are not merely a cluster of rocks."

"I can see that they are well-wooded islands," answered the man.

At this moment the slight mist, which had still lingered, rolled away, and the group of islands discerned by the look-out became distinctly visible to all on deck. They were evidently well-wooded and hilly, for the outline of the highlands could be distinctly seen through the now clear atmosphere.

"We will bear down to them, Pedro," said the captain; "square the yards again. We may be able to procure from them the spars we stand in need of."

The order was obeyed, and in the course of a few minutes the brig was heading towards the islands, and rapidly approaching them—the wind being brought on the quarter, and still blowing a smart breeze.

As the Petrel neared the land a crowd of small sail became discernible, apparently bound up the Bay.

"What can be the meaning of that?" asked Captain De Sylva. "Those vessels are not merchantmen, that's certain. We will give them as wide a berth as possible. They must be a fleet of Greek feluccas and row-boats, bound on some marauding expedition."

Leaving Captain De Sylva and his crew watching, with no little anxiety, the suspicious strangers whom they had suddenly come across, we will return to the island of Samos, where we left Zoe and Giorgio and his followers preparing for the contemplated attack upon the fortress of Mohammed Islem.

So energetic had been the pirates, that by sunset, as Giorgio had told his mother, his little fleet was ready for sea; and before midnight that same evening they had left the Island of Samos in the distance. For a few days their progress northward had been as rapid as they could have wished; but on the third day a storm arose, and as the vessels were small—and though good sea boats, unfitted, many of them, to contend with the elements in their fury—they had taken shelter under the lee of one of the larger islands, at the entrance of the Bay of Salonica, which they had reached before the tempest had commenced.

As soon as the gale had shown symptoms of moderating, Giorgio, who was urged by Zoe, and who was likewise himself anxious to put to sea again as soon as possible, got his vessels under weigh, and it was this fleet which had been descried from the deck of the Petrel. * * * *

The tempest had raged over the entire breadth of the Ægean Sea; and Seymour and Zuleika, and Jane Miller, had been confined within doors, for the rain and wind rendered it unpleasant for any one to go abroad who was not compelled to do so. They had admired the magnificent strife of the elements from the windows of their little cottage, which overlooked the sea—and what, with indoor enjoyments and the pleasure experienced in watching the progress of the gale from their snug retreat, the hours had not passed wearily. Still, they were glad, on the approach of fine weather, to wander abroad and breathe the fresh air, and exercise their limbs. Together they rambled down to the beach and amused themselves with gathering the shells which had been cast ashore during the storm.

At length, growing weary, Seymour and Zuleika had seated themselves in the harbor on the shore, already spoken of, and,

while Jane still lingered on the beach, were amusing themselves by speaking of their future prospects.

"We shall soon quit this isle, dear George," said Zuleika, "and I shall really quit it with regret, although I shall be happy to go with you to any home you choose; but, I don't know how it is: every place where I linger becomes dear to me. There are a thousand little associations called forth which we do not feel until the hour of departure draws near. I longed to quit Annabon, and yet I left it, after all, with feelings of sorrow. The negroes were ignorant and superstitious, and yet I had learned to love them, for they were ever kind to me. I hear and read of cruelty and selfishness amongst mankind, and yet I have found every body kind and good, and I have thought that if we are kind to others we shall always find them kind to us. Is it not so, George—is it not our own fault when men treat us badly?"

"Often, perhaps, it is, Zuleika," replied Seymour; "nay, I believe that in the first instance it is always so. I once thought differently; but your influence, dear (and as he spoke, he drew his wife towards him and kissed her cheek), your influence has created a change within me that I would I had experienced long ago. I should have been spared much pain—much sorrow," and dropping his voice, he added, almost inaudibly, "and much remorse."

They sat silent for some time. At length Zuleika, raising her eyes towards her husband's face, said—

"Dear George, I have long wanted to speak to you on a subject, which, nevertheless, I have been delicate in approaching, because you have never mentioned it. You know that old Otho, the fisherman, who lives near the creek, has been a favorite of mine ever since I have been here. The old man is so kind and gentle, yet so cheerful, it is delightful to be in his society. He is poor, for he is growing old and feeble, poor fellow, and can no longer procure fish for the market at Lemnos. He has enough to do to obtain support for himself. Shortly after you left me—the last time you went to America—I walked out with Jane to old Otho's cottage. We found the old man seated in front of his door, with an old worn volume on his knee, which he was perusing earnestly. Otho can read, though few on the island are able to do so. He was born and educated in Athens, and was a grown man when he came to this island. The volume was so large and cumbersome, the print

was so small, as I could see, and the leaves in many places so soiled, that I felt sorry for the old man, and I said :

“ ‘ Otho, since you are so fond of reading, I will send you some Greek books from my library, the print of which is larger, and which are bound in smaller compass. That book is heavy to hold, and it must injure your eyes to read it.’ ”

“ ‘ The old man looked up from his book, and said, in his pure Greek, that Greek I like to hear him speak, so different is it from the patois of the islands I am accustomed to hear, that when he speaks, it is as though my books were talking to me in their own fine language :

“ ‘ Lady,’ he said, ‘ I am growing old very fast, and but a few years can remain to me; perhaps a few months will carry me to my grave, and all the time I now have to read—for I read but slowly, my eyesight is failing fast—is all too little for the study of the book I now hold open before me.’ ”

“ ‘ But,’ I repeated, ‘ I will lend you some books that you can read more easily ; and you will not so much injure your eyesight.’ ”

“ ‘ I thank you, lady,’ he continued; ‘ your gentle voice is pleasing to the ear of the old man. It recalls to my memory many happy recollections of days gone by. I feel your kindness; but, can you send me a book so valuable as this?’ ”

“ ‘ I smiled; but I bethought me, ‘ the book has belonged to those once dear to him, who are now no more, and it is wrong in me to smile at his simplicity—worn as the volume is, he prizes it highly;’ and I recollected how, when you were away, I cherished even a faded flower that you had plucked and worn.

“ ‘ I will send you other books, and still you can keep that volume,’ I replied.

“ ‘ You mistake me, lady,’ he answered. ‘ I will speak plainly to you. You are not one who will take offence from an aged man, who wishes you well. I would that you would read my old, worn, battered volume, in preference to the gay, new books of which you speak. Read it with me, and to me, lady, and you will oblige me more than by sending me the books you so kindly offer—books that I have no doubt are good, but which I have no time to read.’ ”

“ ‘ What is the title of the book you prize so highly?’ I asked; for I could not help being impressed by the old man’s earnestness.

“ ‘ Lady,’ he replied, ‘ it is the book of books—it is the Bible.’ ”

"My curiosity was aroused. Amongst all the books you had brought me, George, you had never brought me a Bible. No wonder; you could not think of everything—you already bring me too much; and I never asked you for a Bible. Still, I had often read of it in other volumes, and I asked old Otho to let me see it; and, glancing over its pages, I promised, since his eye-sight was failing, to come the next day and read it to him. George, you should have witnessed the smile that illumined his countenance. He took my hand :—

"‘Lady,’ he said, ‘I have prayed for this and now it has come to pass. Yes, lady, read that book for me, and then you will soon read it for yourself.’

"I went, according to promise, and on the next day I read to him from the New Testament; from the gospel of St. John. At first it was dull and incomprehensible to me, and I soon began to weary of it; and when I had finished reading, and Otho asked me how I liked the words of his old, battered volume, I told him how I felt. Then he explained to me that which was mysterious in its pages, with earnestness and fervor, and with an eloquence so far above his condition, that I almost fancied that he was inspired like the holy men he spoke of—and I longed for the hour to come when I should read to him again. I went the next day, and the next, and I persuaded Jane to go with me, and every day I loved more and more, as I began to understand it better, the volume I once thought so lightly of. At length others used to come into the hut and hear me read, and Otho, when I had finished, would explain the dark passages so easily and so distinctly that he charmed all who listened to him. He told of olden times when prophets sent direct from God to His chosen people, the Jews (a race whom I have never seen, but whom I much wish to see), led them out of difficulties and dangers, that but for this guidance would have overwhelmed them. He spoke of prophecies foretold in the Old Testament, and he showed from the New Testament, which he said was written in my own beautiful Greek, how many of these prophecies had been fulfilled, and, how many more had yet to be fulfilled and would be, as surely as yonder sun shines over our heads. George, I experienced doubts and fears, I thought it impossible that I could ever be worthy of the glory and happiness promised in that blessed book. And I told old Otho of my fears and doubts, and he bade me hope and pray, and he prayed with me and for me; and, dear George, I trust I have become a Christian, not such as I would wish to be; that is impossible

to us while on earth; but still, a Christian inasmuch as I have hope in the blessed Redeemer. Dear George," she continued after a pause, looking pleadingly and tearfully up into Seymour's face, and taking his hand in hers—"will *you* not, for my sake, for the sake of our baby, whom we so dearly love. Will not you, too, strive to become a Christian?"

Again she paused, as if waiting for a reply from her husband; but Seymour had listened to her words, as though he were in a trance; he could not trust himself to speak—he was unable to speak; as he essayed to do so, the words rose in his throat and choked his utterance; he felt his conscience bitterly upbraiding him; he saw as in a vision, the panorama of his past life unrolled and spread out before him. He felt the words of Zuleika prick him to the heart; she had spoken and pleaded as with the voice of an angel; but she seemed to him, involuntary, to be an accusing as well as a pleading angel.

Zuleika observed his emotion.

"Why this emotion, dear George," said she. "I know that hitherto, kind, generous, noble, as you are, you have not experienced the delights of religion or you would have spoken of them to me, and loving me as you do, would have sought to have led me to love them. You are much—so very much wiser than I—but old Otho showed me the passage in the Testament where it said that wisdom—the wisdom inculcated by Christianity was often denied to the wise and given to babes. George, old Otho now lies bed-ridden; but he still takes delight in the holy book. Let us go to him together. Promise me that you will visit him with me?"

"I will. I will," said Seymour, in a voice choking with vainly suppressed emotion. Zuleika arose and threw her arms around her husband's neck.

* * * * *

At this time Jane Miller, who had all this time lingered on the beach, entered the harbor with her apron full of sea-shells.

"Am I interrupting you?" she said. "There is a fleet of small vessels sailing past the island. I have just noticed them; they are far off and I cannot tell what they resemble; and away to the northward is a larger vessel steering directly for the island. She looks like a merchant ship, and must have suffered in the storm, for she has lost or struck her top-gallant masts."

Seymour and Zuleika, immediately left the harbor with Jane, and walking round a rocky promontory some distance from the

harbor, from the base of which the vessel had been espied by Jane, they, too, saw them distinctly. Seymour at once surmised that the flotilla of small vessels were bound on some marauding expedition, commanded probably by some pirate chieftain, for he knew that hordes of pirates still infested the Grecian Archipelego. He was disturbed at the sight, although the flotilla appeared to be giving the island a wide berth, and was apparently bound for the Bay of Solonica. But the brig was evidently bound for the island, and at the present moment, he felt that pirates or peaceful merchantmen would be alike unwelcome.

It had been calm since noon, and still remained nearly so, and the vessels were making but little progress, but he anticipated the arrival of the merchant ship during the the night. It was growing late and he knew that after sunset the wind would freshen. He resolved therefore to conduct Zuleika and Jane to the cottage and then to return to the beach at the end of the promontory and watch the strangers, and if the captain or crew of the brig should land, to meet them on the shore.

The party, therefore, were about to return, when an exclamation from Jane Miller attracted the notice of her companions, and looking towards her, they saw that her gaze was directed to the extreme point of the summit of the promontory.

There stood—her tall, erect figure clearly defined against the evening sky—the aged sybil, Marca. One arm was raised and the hand stretched out, and the long skinny forefinger, plainly distinguishable in the clear atmosphere, was pointed in the direction of the flotilla; while with the other hand she waved to the party below, as if she were warning them of some impending danger; and still while they gazed at her with astonishment, they heard her shrill voice chanting in mournful measure some strange, rude Runic rhyme. Zuleika nervously clasped her husband's arm and shrunk to his side, and Seymour's face flushed as he said.

"If I were going to remain here, I would have that old witch removed from the island. Her mummeries are too absurd. She has frightened you, my Zuleika. Heed her not—the creature is insane." But as he spoke the tones of his voice told that the superstition inherent in his nature was awakened by the strange demeanor of the sybil, and he really felt more frightened of that aged woman, then he would have been had ten armed men, each seeking his life, suddenly confronted him.

The cheek of Jane Miller, too, was blanched, but she did not speak.

"I know it is foolish to be frightened of Marca, George," said Zuleika. "She has been kind to me during your absence; I do not believe there is any harm in her." And as she spoke she recovered from her alarm, and loosening her grasp of her husband's arm, walked by his side to the cottage.

It was more than a mile distant from the base of the promontory, and when they reached it, Seymour desired them to remain, while he returned to meet the captain of the merchantman, whose vessel he had no doubt had been disabled in the storm and who was coming to seek assistance. The Greek vessels were steering a course that would take them clear of the island, though he felt somewhat uneasy in consequence of their vicinity, he did not think they had any intention of visiting the island. He hastened to the beach, for the wind was now freshening rapidly, and blowing dead upon the shore, and he expected the merchantman would drop her anchor before he reached the beach.

He was right in his conjecture; she had done so, and a boat was in the act of being lowered when he turned the point. He was so intently watching the vessel that he did not perceive that Marca had descended from her elevated position and was advancing towards him, and she had approached so close before he saw her, that she laid her skinny hand upon his arm.

Seymour started back in dismay. Had a supernatural being appeared to him he could not have exhibited greater alarm.

"Back—back—what do you want with me?" he gasped forth.

"I come to warn you," said Marca, in a solemn measured tone of voice. "I would save the dove from the talons of the falcon—but I dare not break my oath."

"What mean you, woman!" asked Seymour, his wonted composure having returned as he heard the sybil utter these strange words. And in a voice which told that his alarm had taken another direction, he added, "Does any harm threaten Zuleika? But, no; go, foolish woman, go home. I am a fool," he muttered, "to take notice of the poor insane creature."

"See yonder boat approaching the shore," said Marca, unheeding Seymour's words, "I know not whether harm is threatened there; but strange things are revealed to me in my dreams. Do you expect a visit from one who you believe is laid in his grave, far, far below the surface of the ocean, down

in the deep waters, amongst the shells and the coral-reefs of a southern sea? If you do, perhaps this is he."

"But danger lies not with him," she continued: "See yonder flotilla, wending its way to the northward. It is already past this isle; but, beware! Close up the dove-cot. Let no one see the treasure it contains. The birds of prey are abroad, and they spill blood in their path. A guilty deed done in years gone by will this night be avenged—unless some miracle shall stay the destroyer's hand."

"Woman, what mean you; cease these foolish metaphors; by heaven you *shall* speak plainly," said Seymour passionately, and forgetful now of the terrors that had assailed him, he advanced to seize the old sybil; but she fled from him, and merely repeating the word "beware!" clambered up the cliff, notwithstanding her great age, with the agility of a goat, rendering it quite impossible for him to hope to follow her. As she reached a projecting rock midway up the cliff she turned and said:

"I have warned you; but I dare not break my oath," and then immediately disappeared.

The boat was now close to the beach, and Seymour stood awaiting its arrival. He saw it contained but one man besides the two rowers, and this man he supposed was the captain.

The keel grated on the beach, and the captain rising up from the stern-sheets leaped lightly over the bow and advanced to where Seymour was standing, a few yards distant.

At once as he drew near, Seymour recognized in his light step and erect form, that of the Captain of the Portuguese schooner which he had scuttled off the Island of Annabon. The figure of that man, murdered, as he thought, in an hour of phrenzied excitement, had ever haunted his imagination; and now he saw him approaching him in bodily form as last he had seen him. He recalled the events of the past hour—the forebodings of Marca still rang in his ears, and uttering the cry "it is a spirit; it is the ghost of him whom I murdered which has assumed a bodily form, and come to taunt me with my bitterly repented crime;" he sank senseless on the beach.

Captain de Sylva heard the words, and although they were spoken in English, he knew enough of that language to comprehend their import. He rushed to the aid of the conscience-stricken man and raising his head, recognized in him the individual he had met and asked to dine on board his schooner at Annabon.

He looked around him in the hope of seeing some one who

might aid him in resuscitating the fainting man, and in a few moments Marca, who, having concealed herself behind a rock, had seen all that passed from the cliff, was by his side.

She brought water and sprinkled it upon Seymour's face, while De Sylva held his head upon his knee, and in a short time Seymour showed symptoms of revival—but he shuddered and shrank within himself, as he perceived that he was resting upon the knee of one whom he still half believed was a visitant from the other world.

"Where am I?" he asked, gazing vacantly around him, "am I dreaming? Who are you that holds me?"

"Sebastian de Sylva," replied the young Portuguese; "but speak Portuguese or Spanish, Senhor, I can with difficulty understand English. *Caramba!* but this is a strange adventure, and I cannot comprehend it. I may well repeat your question, and ask 'am I dreaming?'"

"Who or whatever you be," said Seymour, suddenly arousing himself, "I am George Seymour, and I was captain of the Albatross, at Annabon, where I met you. Say," he added, with sudden vehemence, "was it not so?"

"It was," replied Don Sebastian; "now I begin to understand matters. Oh! capitano, but that was a foul deed; but it is past, and I saved my life, although my poor fellows became food for the sharks. Why did you not say that the fair recluse was your bride, and I would not have sought to have disturbed your nest. I have heard of you since, for you may well suppose that my curiosity was awakened by what had occurred. Had you sought to kill me, it would have been all well. I can understand your feelings; but why did you extend your vengeance to my unfortunate crew?"

"I am ready to give you satisfaction now," said Seymour, his passion getting the better of his reason.

"No, no, *Madre de Dios!* No, I have had satisfaction enough, Senhor. Come, as I have said, the deed has been done, and cannot be recalled. You were mad with jealousy, I suppose. I am alive, and I forgive you. Here is my hand. Is that enough?"

"I cannot take your hand," said Seymour, again completely abashed. "I have been guilty of a crime which renders that impossible. Speak! what seek you here? Let me aid you if I can, and then let us part."

"As you please," said De Sylva; and, muttering inwardly, he added, "I care not myself about taking your hand. I have

come here to seek some spars," he continued aloud, "for my brig has been knocked about sadly in the gale; and, as you may perceive, I have lost my top-gallant masts. But I have a lady passenger on board my vessel, and I promised to fetch her ashore. It is growing dark, and nothing in the way of business can be done to-night. Is there a house here where I can take her to?"

"She can rest in my cottage. Zuleika, my wife, and a female companion are there," said Seymour, unable to repress any longer his admiration of the careless frankness of the young Portuguese.

"Ah, then, if the recluse of Annabon is here, I shall do myself the pleasure of seeing her, with your permission. Diabolo! but I should like again to see the lady, through whom I got into such a scrape. But, you speak of a female companion:—was that she whom I saw here but this moment?—she helped to bring you to. Where is she gone to? The old woman was as much like a witch as one could well imagine."

Marca had retired unperceived as soon as she saw that Seymour was reviving, and he had not known of her assistance; but he readily divined who it was that Senhor de Sylva alluded to, and he replied in the negative, observing that the woman whom he spoke of was an aged Greek, who sometimes visited the island.

"I hope all the old women here are not like her," said the Portuguese; "however, Senhor, as I find I can procure the spars I need here, I will proceed on board again and bring on shore my passenger. It will be a change for her, poor thing, and to-morrow I shall set my carpenter to work at the spars."

De Sylva returned on board his brig, and speedily again disembarked, and landed with his carpenter and Marie. While he had been absent, Seymour had had time to collect his bewildered senses, and although he could not imagine *how* Captain De Sylva had escaped from the destruction he had sought to wreak upon him and his crew, he became convinced that it really was he in *propria personæ*, and not his wraith that he had seen, and he felt a strange sensation of relief in the knowledge that one man, at least, had escaped the demoniacal vengeance which, from the very hour the dark deed had been consummated, he had constantly and bitterly regretted. "And if one," he thought, "why not all?" And he uttered aloud, "Oh, God! would that such were the case. Oh, that the weight of this dark deed of guilt, at least, were lifted from my

soul!" But ere the last cadence had fallen from his lips, a voice above him exclaimed in Romaic (in that language had *he* spoken) "He that soweth the wind reapeth the whirlwind. Man, blood alone can efface the stains from the hand of him who hath shed blood. But why talk *you* of remorse? Are you the only one who pineth and withereth beneath the curse that a mis-spent life bringeth? Ha, ha, ha! you will have good companionship, and a merry time awaits us in the dark shades of Hades. We shall be jovial together." There was a bitter mockery in the taunting laugh with which these words had been accompanied. It was Marca, who spoke from the rock above, but Seymour's senses had been so confused, his mind so bewildered, that he did not recognize the voice, and to him it seemed as though some supernatural and ill-omened being were taunting him. He stood, vacantly gazing into the mid-air—strange feelings of superstition rapidly gaining the mastery over him—when again he heard the voice chanting in a monotonous tone a string of Romaic verses, which may be translated as follows :

"O'er the sea, o'er the sea,
A cloud, fraught with the tempest, lingers lowering,
Above the deep blue waters, darkly hovering
Unto you—unto me,
Bringing warning, as we stand beneath it cowering.
Woe! woe!

"Can we turn it from its path?
Can we hide us from its wrath?
Can we shun the fatal bolt o'er us impending?
No—no—
It ever hath been so.
Guilt can be washed away alone in blood.
All else were useless, though a second flood
Above, around us were its force expending.
Woe! woe!

"Soon in the grave shall aged Marca lie;
Welcome, then, welcome be the fatal shaft
That shall avenge her evil deeds on earth—
That shall purge from her soul her demon-craft,
And cleanse her spirit ere its second birth.
For oh! 'twere fearful thus, laden with sin, to die!
Woe! woe! woe!"

Again and again were these rude, uncouth verses repeated, and for some time Seymour stood spell-bound—rooted to the spot. But at length he seemed to recollect himself, and to re-

cognize the voice ; and with a laugh of contempt at his own superstitious fancies, he said :

"Psha ! it is that old, insane Marca, chanting forth her doleful ditties from the cliff above me. What folly, to allow these superstitious feelings to overpower me."

He directed his gaze towards the brig. The boat had left her side, and was approaching the shore, and he drew nearer to the landing-place in time to assist the lady whom De Sylva had spoken of on shore, and to welcome her to the island.

Marie was delighted once again to set her feet, though only temporarily, upon *terra firma*, and Seymour invited her and her companion to the cottage where he and Zuleika dwelt.

On his way he said to De Sylva—

"Zuleika believes that you suddenly left the island of Annabon with your schooner"—

"I understand you," replied De Sylva. "I shall keep a still tongue."

Seymour walked to the cottage in a gloomy mood, observing which, and divining its cause, De Sylva generously sought by every means in his power to set his mind at ease—and by his gay conversation had pretty well succeeded in banishing the dark cloud ere they arrived at the cottage—although the latent superstition in Seymour's mind was again partially aroused, as casting his eyes towards the promontory, he saw the tall form of Marca, her right arm and hand stretched out, and her finger pointing to a fiery cloud that was apparently just rising from the horizon. But he shook off the superstitious fear, and muttered to himself—

"Psha ! it is but an evening cloud, and the blood-red tint is caused by the reflection upon it of the rays of the setting sun."

They arrived at the cottage, and Zuleika came out to meet them.

"I have brought you visitors, darling," said Seymour, "one of whom I think you will recognize. It is Captain De Sylva, of the Portuguese schooner which visited Annabon."

"I do recognize and welcome Captain De Sylva," replied Zuleika, at the same time extending her hand to him. The gallant young Portuguese respectfully raised the fair hand to his lips and kissed it; and then Zuleika embraced Marie, and welcomed her to the cottage and to the island. The females retired, and the young mother proudly showed her babe to her visitor, and acquainted Jane Seymour with the name of their unexpected visitor.

Jane had been equally ignorant as Zuleika with regard to the cause of the sudden disappearance of the schooner from Annabon, and only thinking it a strange coincidence that they should so singularly meet again, she expressed her desire not to see him, as an interview must necessarily lead to an explanation with regard to her former disguise, which would be painful to her delicacy.

Seymour and De Sylva spent the remainder of the evening together, until the hour of retiring arrived, when Marie was invited to share Jane's bed with her, and Zuleika provided a couch for De Sylva to repose upon. Then she and her husband retired to their own room, but not to rest; the night was clear and starlight, and the heavens were free from clouds, save the small, dark, fiery, ill-omened shadow, "scarcely larger than a man's hand," which still hovered in the western horizon; and although at any other time it would not have attracted Seymour's attention, now, in conjunction with the events of the last few hours, and the mystical warning of the ancient sibyl, Marca, it created an indefinable sensation of dread—a feeling of terror with regard to some lurking danger that he could not avert, nor fairly meet, since he knew not from what quarter it would assail him—that he could not shake it off, notwithstanding his reason told him it were folly thus to allow his superstitious feelings to work upon his imagination.

Zuleika was not sleepy, and she drew the cot in which her babe was reposing to a seat near the window of the chamber, and seated herself beside her husband on the sofa.

Both were for some moments silent. Zuleika was admiring the calm beauty of the waters of the ocean, which lay spread out before her, smooth as a polished mirror, and reflecting the moon and the myriads of stars in its clear, dark depths; and Seymour seemed also to be gazing at the same object, but in reality his eyes were fixed on vacancy, and busy thoughts—gloomy forebodings of evil—were active within his breast.

At length Zuleika turned from looking upon the glorious moonlit landscape, and directed her gaze upon an object far more beautiful and glorious to a mother's eye—the sweet, placid features, and fat, dimpled arms of her babe, as it lay quietly sleeping in the cot beside her.

She touched Seymour's arm.

"Does she not look like a little angel, George?" she said—"see how she smiles in her sleep—and look! how tightly her little hand clasped my finger as soon as I touched it." The

child awoke as she uttered these words, and looking up with her large, round, blue eyes, smiled upon her mother, for she was already old enough to know her, and used all her little efforts to raise herself up, holding out her arms and kicking her feet from beneath the snowy coverlid. Zuleika snatched her up and kissing her cheeks, pressed her to her bosom.

Seymour was looking on with mingled emotions of conjugal and paternal pride and affection. His gloomy thoughts were for the time being banished.

"Had ever husband or father more reason to be grateful for such a wife and child," he thought, and placing his arm round Zuleika's waist, he affectionately embraced her.

"Darling," said he, "the babe promises to become as lovely as yourself; if she be only as good and pure and true, I shall, indeed, have reason to be proud and grateful."

"And you will be grateful to the donor of this precious gift, George, will you not? You will recollect what you promised me to-day. We will go together and see old Otho—and, George, you will strive to become a Christian, not only in name but in reality, for mine and baby's sake."

"I will, dearest. We will go to-morrow. Old Otho must be provided for before we leave this island."

"Which will be"——

"Soon as possible, dear," said Seymour, interrupting his wife, who at this moment was engaged with the child, and did not observe the strange expression that came over his features as he uttered these words—an expression of mingled doubt and fear, as, though he dreaded some immediately-impending calamity. And he relapsed into his previous gloomy reverie.

Zuleika looked up; and, noticing the gloom upon her husband's brow, she said in accents of tenderness——

"You seem dull and melancholy, George; has anything happened to disturb you? Are you unwell?"

"No, dear; I am quite well, but I do feel dull to-night, and yet I know not why I should do so. Come, let us seek our repose. Sleep will set me all to rights again. And to-morrow we will see Otho, and make some arrangement for the old man's comfort for the rest of his days. And Zuleika, dear, when we get to France, I will purchase you the Bible you so much wish for; and when we are settled in some happy, retired home, we will read and study it together, and you shall teach me how to become a Christian."

"Oh, that will be delightful!" exclaimed Zuleika, with all

the artlessness and glee of a child. "And, dear George, I am so proud of you for promising to save Otho from want during the rest of his life, although it is just like you. Do you know, George, I believe the poor old man has often wanted food, though he never told me so; but I once noticed the bareness of his cupboard, and have carried provisions to him, and his eager looks as he took it from my hands, spoke more than words. Since that day I have taken care, at least, that his daily wants were provided for, and he has been so thankful. He has not said much, but I have seen the tears glistening in his eyes, and felt the pressure of his hand, and watched his trembling lips as he murmured his prayer of gratitude to the God he endeavors to serve for sending him relief through me. Oh, George, it is a happy and a blessed thing to be the almoner of God's bounty."

"And may God bless *you*, darling," was Seymour's reply, as again, tenderly embracing her, he commenced to prepare himself for his night's repose.

Zuleika knelt to pray; she had always been in the practice of doing so since she had first entered the convent school at Grenada; but this night, for the first time since he had knelt, when a little boy, at his mother's knee, and repeated his prayers after her, Seymour joined Zuleika in her prayers.

For two hours all had been silent in the cottage. Its inmates were all soundly sleeping. It was past the midnight hour—and the moon had set beneath the waters, and it had become comparatively dark, although the stars still shone brightly, and the horizon still remained clear—save the fiery cloud already spoken of which had considerably increased in size and arising upwards from the horizon, now seemed to be gradually approaching the cottage.

* * * * *

The fleet of vessels which had been descried in the early part of the evening sailing past the island, were no longer visible. They had entered the bay, and borne upwards with a fair wind, were making rapid progress towards the coast, under the jurisdiction of the unsuspecting Mohammed Islam. All but one; that one was the felucca, commanded in person by Giorgio, or Abdallah—and Zoe was on board with her son.

This vessel had sailed past the island, and then, separating from the fleet, Giorgio had hauled the wind closely, and stood again towards it, under easy sail, being apparently not anxious to approach too close, until after nightfall. The wind, too, had

become light, and it was past the midnight hour when Giorgio cast anchor in the haven opposite to the cottage where Seymour and Zuleika resided.

The Portuguese brig was in the harbor, and Giorgio as well as Zoe, were somewhat disconcerted on perceiving it.

The former having ordered a boat to be lowered, pulled alongside, and, hailing the brig, inquired if the captain was on board. He was answered in the negative, being told that he had gone on shore with a passenger, and was stopping on the island for the night.

"What has brought you to this island?" demanded Giorgio of the *contremaître*.

"We have lost our spars in the gale, as you may perceive," replied the mate; "and have come hither to seek for others. The carpenter is going on shore in the morning to pick some out."

Various other questions were put and replied to, and seemingly satisfied, the pirate chief left the side, greatly to the relief of the honest Portuguese mate, who did not, by half, like the proximity of the suspicious-looking Greek vessel.

Giorgio returned on board.

"It is the brig we saw in the morning, which has come in here disabled," he said. "It has happened rather inopportunistically for our plans, since the captain is on shore, and I see, besides, that the brig carries six guns."

"Nevertheless," returned Zoe, "our purpose must be effected. And you—you are not so cowardly as to fear the rusty guns of a merchantman, which will perhaps burst in the discharge—and which at all events are in general pretty harmless in their effects," and she laughed contemptuously and deridingly as she spoke.

"I am not afraid," replied Giorgio, "and whatever man dares to do, dare I. Nevertheless, it were well if this brig was out of the way. Her commander is on shore, and we may find more resistance than we anticipated."

"And if we do, those who oppose us must die," replied Zoe. "How long have you grown dainty in your trade, and sought to spare human blood, when your purpose demanded that it should be shed?"

"Nay, mother," said Giorgio, "taunt me not with cowardice, for you know that I know not what it is; and as to spilling blood—I have never quailed from it when it has been necessary. Still, I would avoid useless carnage; nor was I aware that it

was your purpose to shed blood, unless it were necessary in our own defence."

"Nor is it," replied Zoe, fiercely; "but every one who lifts a hand to oppose us must be smitten mercilessly to the earth. The Frank and the stranger who is with him—even Bedita herself must die, if she cannot be brought off alive. But I wish her to live, with her child. I wish to witness the anguish of the mother, when the child is taken from her, and she is exposed for sale in the slave mart. I wish to have full and complete vengeance, and the hour so long sought for has arrived. I wish to see Leila's child experience all the anguish that I felt when her mother's baby charms caused my lord to spurn me and to disown my son. Think of this, Abdallah. Think that this minion's mother was the slave who caused you to be cast off, and your birthright to be reft from you. Think of this, son of mine, and let the thought steel your heart, and nerve your arm to vengeance."

Zoe knew that she had touched the right chord. The eyes of the young man glistened with rage as his mother recalled to his recollection the history of the wrongs in which he had been schooled from his earliest youth, and drawing his scimitar, and raising his right arm on high, he made the sign of the Greek cross on his breast with the left, and exclaimed :

"I swear vengeance, implacable vengeance, upon the descendants of Vincenzo and Leila !"

"Enough, enough, my son," said Zoe. "Now let us arrange our plan of action."

The mother and son conferred together. What was the purport of their conversation may best be learned by that which followed.

Half an hour afterwards two boats with wild-looking men left the side of the felucca, and in the stern sheets of the foremost one were seated Giorgio and Zoe.

Could any one have watched the countenance of Zoe, as the boat was pulled on shore on that eventful night, he could not have helped being struck with its dark, strange expression; yet it was a handsome face. Zoe was beautiful still, although she had long passed the period of life when the beauty of most women wanes, even the beauty of those born and nurtured in more northern climes, and daughters of a colder race. She had reached the period of life when amongst the daughters of the South, the peerless charms which have called forth the adoration of the poet, and have imbued the brush of the painter

and the chisel of the sculptor with the spirit of inspiration, have, in a great majority of cases, passed away, "and left no sign;" the blooming maiden has blushed and blossomed into the comely matron; Hebe has ripened into Juno, and for a few years—a very few years—Juno has reigned the queen of majesty and grace; then has come the autumn—the fall of the leaf—not slowly and gently subsiding into winter, but its waning charms withering with the rapidity of a plucked flower scorching beneath the rays of a summer sun. Of the Hebe of but ten years ago—of the Juno of but half that period—there remains a toothless, wrinkled hag, in whose complexion of mahogany, and in whose wrinkled and shrunken features, not a vestige can be traced of the elegance and grace that but comparatively a short time before might have charmed the cold heart of an anchorite. Even the voice—the gentle voice, that thing so sweet in woman—has changed; no longer lowly, gently, slowly does it plead, and plead but to conquer the sterner sex—no longer is it heard in bursts of musical laughter, compared with which the sweetest artistic sounds are inharmonious—but harsh and cracked, it has become discordant in its tones, even when its utterer would strive most to please. Such is the penalty that the all-fascinating charms of Italia's and Grecia's daughters must pay for their brief spring and summer of loveliness. But with Zoe it was not thus. Her beauty had partaken more of a masculine character, and she seemed to have inherited with it a masculine endurance; and any one who had seen her features as she sat in the stern sheets of the boat which bore her, as she hoped, to witness the consummation of her long cherished desire for vengeance—perfect—complete—would have likened her to a beautiful fury—a fallen angel, whose beauty had not withered, though she had become an outcast from paradise; but in whose face the demoniac passions which had lured her on to the wreck of her hopes, to the loss of her eternal beatitude, had imprinted their indelible marks, still without power to utterly obliterate the stamp of the divinity which had originally been imprinted upon her features.

Giorgio—as he was called by his band, although Zoe ever called him by the name of Abdallah—had already, as it appeared, forgotten the words which had caused the blood to tingle in his veins, and awakened in him something of the vindictive spirit of his mother. The well-spring which had been touched, and which had aroused such an ebullition of fearful

passion, had as suddenly subsided, as soon as the hand that touched it had been withdrawn ; and though the expression of his countenance was still fierce and fearless, the features had assumed their characteristic careless recklessness. Silently the rowers pulled towards the shore ; the boat stranded on the sand, and the crew, all but one—to whom its keeping was confided—sprang ashore ; and again Giorgio and Zoe stepped aside and communed with each other on the beach.

* * * * *

Seymour and Zuleika were sleeping ; but the slumbers of the latter were strangely disturbed, and every now and then she awoke with a start and listened earnestly, as though in her dreams she had heard some fearful noise, or seen some frightful object ; but all was still, save the hollow, melancholy murmur of the surf, which, as has already been mentioned, perpetually broke upon the rocky coast to windward of the cottage, and Zuleika would pass her hand over the head of her husband to satisfy herself that he was beside her, and then pressing her baby to her breast, would smile at her own fears, and endeavor to compose herself to sleep again ; but only again and again to awaken in a similar condition of affright.

It is a strange, an inexplicable mystery, that forewarning, which, let sophists say what they may, is often manifest in our dreams previous to the occurrence of any great calamity. We know not why our slumbers should be more disturbed than usual without any apparent cause. We know not how it is that little trifling occurrences, which in ordinary times would pass unnoticed, are all magnified into matters of moment ; but so it is ; and it is one of the hidden mysteries of natural philosophy which man is unable to fathom.

Again Zuleika awoke, and this time she felt assured that it was not alone the melancholy music of the surf which disturbed the solemn silence of the night. She fancied she heard the voices of men, borne faintly and indistinctly to her ears upon the scarcely perceptible zephyrs ; and greatly terrified, although unwilling to arouse Seymour without sufficient cause, she sat up in her bed to listen and to assure herself that her fancy was not playing her false. No ; nearer and nearer seemed the voices to advance, and now her quick ear—for every sense was peculiarly active at this moment—detected the measured tramp of footsteps—trodden lightly and softly, yet distinctly audible. She sprang from her bed, and peeped out from the casement. She had not been deceived, for stealthily approaching the cot-

tage from the shore was a band of men, and two vessels were now visible in the harbor where only one had lain at anchor when she had retired to rest. She could barely distinguish the outlines of the forms of the men as they approached, for the moon had gone down, as we heretofore mentioned, and the pale twinkling of the stars was partially obscured, for the ominous cloud which had been observed rising from the waters in the distant horizon, now had so increased in size as to cover half the heavens, and it hung directly over the cottage. Greatly alarmed, she stepped back from the window, and retreating to the bed, touched her husband on the shoulder.

"Wake, George, wake," she said; "there are men advancing towards our cottage, and a strange sail—one of the fleet I saw yesterday, I think—is at anchor in the bay."

Seymour sprang up from the bed, and hurried to the window. The men had approached nearer, and he at once suspected them to be a party of marauders who had landed on the island with the object of robbery. He hastily threw on his clothing, and descended to the apartment occupied by De Sylva, whom he informed of the presence of the pirates, and of his suspicions of an attack upon the cottage. In a few moments the Portuguese had put on his clothing, and Seymour having handed him a pair of pistols and a cutlass, he re-ascended to Zuleika, and desired her to retire into the chamber occupied by Marie and Jane.

"Is there danger of an attack, George?" she asked.

"There is, darling; but when they find we are prepared for them they will very probably retire," said Seymour.

"Then," replied Zuleika, "my place is beside my husband and our babe. I will not leave you."

There was no time for further parley; the band had reached the little inclosure surrounding the cottage, and it was evident from their movements that they had no suspicion that their approach had been discovered. One, who appeared to be the leader, stood aside with a tall female, and conversed for some moments, and then, as he made a sign to his followers, the whole party stealthily advanced. Zuleika, holding her babe, whom she had snatched from the cot, in her arms, was looking out from the window, while Seymour and De Sylva were examining the priming of their firearms. Suddenly she exclaimed:

"George, the woman approaching is Zoe. What can be the meaning of this? Surely they are friends. They can intend us no harm."

But Seymour thought differently. For the first time an idea of the real object of the marauders flashed upon him.

"Zoe!" he exclaimed, and, peeping from the window, he added, "It is indeed! Then there is nothing left for us but defence to the last."

He whispered a few words to De Sylva, and the two men approached the casement, having desired Zuleika (who had been joined by Marie and Jane, both of whom had been alarmed by the noise in the cottage) to retire to an adjoining apartment.

The band were now close to the cottage, and were evidently preparing to surround it, with the intention of forcing an entrance, when Seymour discharged a pistol over the head of their leader. They were taken so completely by surprise that many of them showed symptoms of retreating, being probably under the impression that several of the brig's crew were in the cottage, and that the attack had been anticipated. They were, however, addressed by Zoe, who, with energetic action, stigmatized them as cowards, and urged them at once to enter the cottage.

At this moment Seymour opened the casement, and demanded, in the Romaic dialect, what they wanted.

The leader replied, in the same dialect—

"We demand the rendition of Bedita, who is a daughter of our race, and is unlawfully detained by the Frank, who has assumed the proprietorship of this island, which belongs to us. Deliver up Bedita, and we will retire."

"Never!" replied Seymour; and hardly had the words escaped his lips when a pistol-shot entered the casement above his head and lodged in the wall behind him.

There was a suppressed shriek from Marie and Jane, and Seymour turned his head, fearing that some one had been hit. He saw, however, that the females were merely frightened. Zuleika, still holding her babe, although pale as marble, showed a spirit that he little dreamed she possessed.

"It is nothing, George," she said. "Jane was frightened at the sound of the pistol, but she will not shriek again. I heard what was said, and I trust all to you. Alive, neither you nor I will fall into the hands of these men, though God knows why they should seek to injure me."

Seymour kissed her cheek and pressed her hand, but without replying, he returned to the side of De Sylva. There were ten or twelve men in the band, and fancying that the pistol-

shot had taken effect, as they had heard the shriek, they rushed in a body to the cottage porch, evidently with the intention of forcing the door.

"Take good aim and fire," said Seymour to De Sylva, and at the same moment the report of two pistols were heard, and two of the pirates fell to the earth, rolling over and tearing up the soil in handfuls in their agony.

A volley from the band was the reply to this demonstration of determination on the part of the besieged, but Seymour and De Sylva had retired into the recess behind the casement, and again the balls entered the room and lodged in the walls. This time the terrified females were silent. Their first alarm had subsided, and with the passive courage and presence of mind so often displayed by women in the hour of danger, they quietly took the discharged pistols which Seymour and De Sylva had laid aside, and proceeded to reload them. It was hazardous now for either Seymour or the Portuguese to show themselves at the casement; instant death would have been the result of such rashness. They could only, therefore, keep up an irregular and ill-directed fire, unconscious whether or not their shots took effect.

Now all was silent without, and the besieged party began to entertain the hope that the assailants, finding that they had been resolutely met, had withdrawn, and Seymour was in the act of approaching the window to reconnoitre, when De Sylva laid his hand upon his arm—

"Do you not smell smoke?" he asked; "and hark! there is the crackling of burning timber; the wretches have fired the cottage."

Hardly had he spoken, when a volume of smoke burst into the apartment, so dense and stifling that they could hardly draw their breaths, and in another moment the boards began to grow heated beneath their feet, and the flames burst through the slight flooring. To stay a moment longer in the room would have insured the destruction of the whole party. To flee seemed alike to threaten them with instant death at the hands of the now infuriated pirates. In fact, there was no hope of escape, and a very few moments would have witnessed the sacrifice of Seymour and De Sylva, and the capture of the women, had not an unforeseen diversion in their favor attracted the attention of the assailants, and rendered it necessary for them to defend themselves on their part from an attack they had not anticipated. The mate of the Portuguese brig had

been much alarmed at the appearance of the felucca in the bay, and the questions that had been asked by the commander of the suspicious-looking vessel had not seemed to quiet his apprehensions. He had kept the night-watch himself, had seen the departure of the boat from the side of the felucca, and had watched their movements after they had landed upon the shore as well as he was able to do with the aid of a night-telescope. He had heard the report of the first pistol, fired by Seymour, and the faithful fellow, believing his captain, who was a favorite with all on board, to be in danger, had called five of the seamen out of the seven comprising the crew, and, putting himself at their head, had landed and reached the scene of the affray just at the moment when the pirates, exasperated at the opposition they had met with, and at the loss of two of their comrades, had fired the cottage.

The island was but sparsely inhabited, but the simple fishermen and their families had in the short space of time that had elapsed since Seymour had brought Zuleika thither, become much attached to them, and the male inmates of two cottages that were located near that occupied by Seymour and Zuleika had been alarmed by the unwonted sound of firearms, and when the crew of the brig approached, they at the request of the mate had joined them, thus augmenting the force to seven men, who arrived opportunely, just at the moment when, after having succeeded in firing the cottage, the pirates imagined they had secured an easy prey.

* * * * *

"We can endure this no longer; death in open fight were preferable to be smothered and consumed amid this smoke and flame," said Seymour, and snatching the infant from Zuleika's arms, while with his left arm he encircled the slender waist of his young wife, he called upon Jane Miller to follow him, and rushed through the stifling smoke as though he was unencumbered by any weight, while De Sylva caught up Marie in similar fashion, and followed close after him. The poor girls uttered not one cry of alarm. As we have said, the moment they had realized a sense of their danger, they had not only refrained from showing any outward signs of fear, save the pallor of their cheeks; but they had done their best to aid in the gallant though useless endeavor to hold the cottage against its assailants; now they readily submitted themselves to the guidance of their protectors, and in the course of a few moments they were breathing gratefully the pure air of the night

—a happy relief, for they had been nearly suffocated in the cottage.

A sad scene of desolation, however, met their gaze when they had gained the open air. The light, fragile structure they had just quitted was already doomed ; in less than five minutes it was a mere heap of smouldering ruins.

Meanwhile the pirates, on meeting the unexpected opposition from the crew of the brig and the two Greek fishermen, had endeavored to retreat towards the beach, still fighting as they fled ; and they had been followed by the assailants.

The report of pistols and the clash of steel was heard by the party that had just effected a narrow escape from the burning cottage, and as soon as Seymour and De Sylva had in some measure recovered from the effects of the smoke, they rushed forward in the direction whence the sounds of strife proceeded, followed by the women, whom no persuasions could induce to remain behind. They were ignorant of the nature of the diversion that had been made in their favor ; but Seymour and De Sylva had become excited for the affray, and rushed to mingle in it with the ardor of bloodhounds.

When they reached the beach, they found a deadly fight raging with the utmost fury on both sides. The parties, since the death of the two Greek sailors, who had fallen on the first discharge from the pistols of Seymour and De Sylva, were very nearly matched, although still the pirates had rather the superiority in point of numbers. One of the Portuguese seamen and another one of the Greeks had fallen on the beach, and now, there being no time to re-load the firearms, a terrific hand-to-hand combat had commenced, in which Zoe was observed to take an active part. She had seized a cutlass from the rigid hand of the dead Greek sailor, and was dealing furious blows with it on all sides. The men, who rushed wildly and recklessly upon the Greeks, shrunk back from the fury of the Amazon.

When Seymour and De Sylva reached the spot, the former readily recognized the two Greek fishermen who had arrayed themselves on his side, and the latter as readily recognized his own gallant tars. Raising a shout of defiance, he plunged in amongst them, followed by Seymour ; and the Greeks, seeing the reinforcement, showed signs of wavering. They would have fled to their boat, but they were rallied by Giorgio ; and again the desperate conflict commenced with renewed energy and fury on both sides. In the heat of the strife, Seymour had

not noticed that Zoe had withdrawn herself from the affray, and right and left were he and his gallant band dealing their blows, with every prospect of eventual success, for two more of the pirates had fallen, when his attention was arrested by a fearful shriek from Zuleika. Wildly, he turned his head in the direction whence the sound proceeded, and saw her in the dim light, struggling in the powerful clutches of Zoe, who had nearly reached the boat with her, and who was calling upon the pirates to cease the strife, and follow her, and thus make their escape with their prize on board the felucca.

Maddened with what he saw, Seymour was thrown off his guard, and his left arm was rendered powerless by a heavy blow from the scimeter of a Greek sailor with whom he was desperately fighting when the fearful scream had called his attention from his opponent. The Greek saw his advantage, and a second blow would have ended Seymour's life, had not De Sylva observed his danger, and rushing towards him struck the pirate a sweeping blow with the heavy cutlass he carried, which clove him from the crown of his head to the shoulder blade. The seaman fell to the ground, then rolled over and over in agony, and then, springing half up, fell heavily upon the earth, dead, while the blood spouted in a black stream from his throat, and dyed and saturated the sand around him.

Seymour was severely wounded ; a crimson stream was pouring from his arm ; but, heedless of the pain, he rushed madly to the boat just in time to reach it before Zoe had succeeded in launching it from the sand into deep water—there, weakened with the loss of blood, he fell senseless into the ebbing waters, and would have drowned, had he not been dragged forth by one of the Greek fishermen, who happily arrived in time to rescue him.

Giorgio had rushed to the assistance of Zoe, and the remnant of his band, seeing now that the odds were against them, were also making all haste to reach the boat, which they would have succeeded in shoving off, had not De Sylva taken the opportunity to reload his pistol. He fired it at Giorgio, who fell mortally wounded into the water.

Zuleika had fainted in the arms of Zoe, but the infant was screaming fearfully ; and, aroused to consciousness by the voice of his child, Seymour sat up and loading his pistol hastily, fired it at a tall female who had at that moment, for the first time made her appearance at the scene of strife, and snatched the infant from the arms of Zoe.

A yell of agony burst from the aged Marca, for it was she who, with what purpose must forever remain unknown, had snatched the infant from her daughter's arms—and a piercing shriek of pain from the infant, told that the shot had a double effect ; Marca fell, still holding the babe in her arms, and when De Sylva rushed forward to take the infant from her, both were dead ; the ball had passed through the body of the babe, and had lodged in Marca's heart. Seymour in a moment of phrenzy had shot his own child.

When Zoe saw her son fall, she dashed aside the fainting form of Zuleika, who fell senseless on the sand, and rushing into the water, she fell upon him, caught him in her embrace, and with wild energy sought to staunch the blood which gushed in a dark stream from his side, with her long black hair, the meanwhile lavishing upon him every expression of endearment with which the Greek vocabulary is so rich, and mingling with those expressions of endearment terrific objurgations upon his murderers ; then, suddenly springing up, she rushed towards the prostrate form of Zuleika, and drawing a dagger from her girdle, raised her arm in the air, and struck with deadly force at the breast of the unconscious girl.

At the moment she raised her arm a pistol shot from De Sylva broke the bone, but it was too late ; the arm fell feebly, but the convulsive shudder which shook the frame of Zuleika told too truly that Zoe had partially, at least, succeeded in her murderous design.

The remnant of the crew of the felucca, reduced to three in number, finding that they had been completely defeated, and that their leaders had fallen, put off to their vessel, which was immediately got under weigh, and before daylight they were far from the island, bound to rejoin their comrades, and to report to them the sad failure of their ill-starred expedition.

A sad, sad scene greeted the approach of morn on Zuleika's Isle. In the cabin of one—the surviving one of the fishermen who had so generously aided in the defence of the cottage—the remnant of those who, full of life and hope, but yesterday had met in the deadly conflict of the night, were assembled. Of the five men belonging to the Portuguese brig, but three were living. De Sylva had escaped unscathed, although he had been most daring in the affray. Seymour was sitting in a chair beside the rude couch which supported the dying Zuleika, scarcely able to support himself upright in consequence of the weakness occasioned by the loss of blood, with a face

pallid as marble, and so overpowered with grief that he scarcely knew what he was doing or where he was; while ever and anon he burst forth in bitter lamentations that he had not fallen in the fight rather than have been spared to suffer the misery he now endured. On a table near the couch was stretched the corpse of the infant, still smiling sweetly, even in death; and beside the pale corpse were seated Marie and Jane, dissolved in tears. They had been impotent yet anguished witnesses of the direful affray of the previous night.

Zuleika was still breathing, but from the moment she had received the fatal blow she had not spoken, and the gurgling in her throat told that her dissolution was at hand.

Unable to endure the harrowing scene, De Sylva quitted the cabin to breathe the fresh sea breeze of the morning. He wandered to the beach, which, during the night, had been the scene of strife. There still lay the dead bodies of his own gallant crew, and that of the fisherman who had perished in the defence of his patron. And there, too, lay the stiffened corpses of the Greek pirates, and that of the ancient sibyl, Marca, hideously revolting in death; but there were yet two others lying beneath the water, a short distance from the shore, barely covered by the tide. These were the bodies of Zoe and Abdallah. De Sylva drew them, with some difficulty, on shore, for the form of the pirate chief was tightly clasped in the embrace of the female. His death, it was evident, had been caused by the ball, which had penetrated his side and pierced his vitals; but Zoe showed no wound but the broken arm. She had crawled from the spot where she had fallen to seek and embrace her son, and had died, not from the effect of the wound she had received, but from the intensity of her own emotions—the thought of the ruin and death she had brought upon the only one being she loved—the consciousness that she had failed in her diabolical attempts, and that her hopes of satiating her vengeance according to her own desires were for ever frustrated.

De Sylva returned to the cabin, and beckoning the poor remnant of his crew, he ordered them to remove the dead bodies and place them in the boat, and then stepping on board himself, he ordered the seamen to pull out into the bay. There, at a distance of a mile from the shore, in the deep blue waters of the *Ægean* Sea, the dead were cast overboard, foe and friend “in one burial blent,” and the prayers of the Catho-

lic church repeated over their remains as they sunk down deep—deep beneath the still ocean surface.

This needful rite ended, De Sylva returned to the shore, and with a heavy heart and slow footsteps retraced his path to the fisherman's cabin.

A change had taken place in his absence. An aged woman, to whom Zuleika had been known, and to whom she had been kind since her residence on the isle, had come to the cottage, and witnessing with an aching heart the wild grief of Seymour, and hearkening to his impassioned request for one word—one single word from Zuleika's lips—ere death, fast approaching, had sealed them for ever, she had retired to the fields, and gathering some herbs, had made a decoction, with which she had wetted the lips of the poor, innocent, unconscious sufferer, at the same time endeavoring to pour a few drops down her throat. The effect had been electrical. The dying girl gasped for breath, her frame shook violently, and her agonized friends, who had clustered around the couch, turned away with sickening hearts; but soon her muscles relaxed, and, opening her eyes, she gazed wildly around her; then recognizing Seymour, who, no longer able to control his emotion, was weeping over her, she smiled, and said—

"You here, dear George? Where am I? What has happened? Where is our babe, George?"

Seymour was unable to reply, but he stooped his head and passionately kissed her lips and brow.

"Ha!" she continued, "I recollect it all now. Thank God that you, dear George, have not fallen a victim to the fury of those evil men. Why did they attack us, George? Oh! I feel faint. George, I am dying. Where is our babe?"

"She is in Jane Miller's charge, my Zuleika," said Seymour, as well as his grief would allow him to speak. "You are too weak to see her."

"Nay, George, she is dead. I have lain a long time insensible to the things of earth, and I have seen our dear child, a happy angel in heaven; and she smiled on me, and made her little innocent gestures for me to follow her. I shall do so soon. I know your motive, George, in trying to deceive me; but there is no need of it—I know all. Place her beside me. Let me die with her in my arms, pillowed upon my breast; and, George, we will watch over you, and do you, too, soon join us in the glorious resting-place where our little Zuleika's

spirit now is, and where mine will soon rejoin hers. Why those tears, George?" she continued, witnessing the evidence of his emotion. "I am happy. I could have wished to have lived a little while longer on earth, *to be with you always*, George, as we have so often fondly pictured; but it has been otherwise decreed, and our home, so often spoken of, so long patiently waited for, will now be in heaven."

There was a stir at the door of the cabin, and an aged man, nearly blind, was led in by two of the youths of the island.

"It is Father Otho," exclaimed the owner of the cabin. "Lady, old Otho has come to see you."

Zuleika faintly smiled and endeavored to extend her hand to the old man, but she was unequal to the effort. Otho had been led to the bedside, and he saw the ineffectual movement, and took the fair, delicate hand in his own withered palm.

"Lady," he said, in his pure, musical Greek, "this is a sorrowful sight. It is sad to witness the young and beautiful stricken to death and borne away to the cold grave, before the aged and palsied, who have long been waiting, expectant of the visit of the dread messenger. Yet, lady, yours is a happier lot than mine, sorrowful as are the circumstances under which your spirit is about to wing its flight to the realms of light. You have been spared the sorrows and distresses of a long and weary life, and ere you have lost the freshness and innocence of youth, are about to leave this dull earth and partake of the joys of eternal happiness."

"I know—I feel it is so—good Otho," replied Zuleika, who was momentarily growing weaker, for her sand of life almost run out, had been but temporarily stayed by the elixir that the old Greek woman had prepared. "My child is gone before me to the eternal world of which we have so often discoursed in your humble cabin. I long to rejoin her, but still I would linger willingly had heaven not decreed it otherwise, for the sake of my husband. It is a bitter thought that I must leave him behind; but may God grant that in His good time he may be united to me there. There shall be our everlasting home, dear George—there the happy abode where we shall be together always," she continued addressing Seymour. "You, our little Zuleika—poor innocent babe—and I. We have only mistaken the locality of that blissful abode we have so often dreamed of. We thought it would be on earth, dear George. One wiser than we has decreed that it shall be in heaven. George, you will meet me in heaven; and you Jane," addressing

Jane Miller, who, with Marie, was sitting at the bedside drowned in tears; "and you, too, good, dear old Otho, to whom I owe so much; and all—all who are here?"

"Let us pray," solemnly exclaimed old Otho, rising from his seat with a strength and agility that seemed impossible for one so decrepit with age and infirmity to possess. "Let us pray to God that all who are now here assembled may meet in heaven;" and falling upon his knees by the bedside, he began to pray aloud.

With a simultaneous movement all present knelt down, and the aged Christian poured forth an extempore prayer, with a fervor and eloquence that touched the hearts of all the assembly.

He was raised to his seat when he had concluded, for his strength, seemingly so supernaturally given him, had failed, and Seymour, rising at the same moment, again took his seat beside his dying wife. A film was gathering over her eyes, her sight was failing, for she feebly endeavored to stretch forth her hand to Seymour, groping as one in the dark. The grief-stricken, almost heart-broken husband, took the soft, fair hand in his own, and bent down over her.

"Closer, closer, George," she gasped, "place your ear close to my lips."

Tremblingly and silently Seymour obeyed.

"Remember," said the dying girl, "remember, George! you promised me that—you—would strive—to become a Christian—promise me again."

Seymour was unable to speak—but he pressed her hand. The pressure was feebly returned. The sign was understood, and a smile illumined Zuleika's pale face, while her lips moved, as if she were uttering a prayer, or whispering her gratitude to heaven.

The arm that encircled the dead babe moved convulsively, as though the dying mother were unwilling to part with the mortal remains of her infant until her spirit rejoined that of her child in heaven.

"George," she faintly murmured in disconnected sentences, "I must leave you, dear husband—I am called away. I hear strains of sweet music, and angelic forms arrayed in bright garments are beckoning to me from the sky. But why is it dark, George? Why have they closed the shutters? They need not be afraid to see me die."

"It is not dark, Zuleika, my only love—the shutters have

not been closed," replied Seymour, but she whom he had addressed did not hear him. Her hand was still locked in that of her husband, a convulsive shudder agitated her frame, a gurgling, choking sound issued from her throat, for a moment she struggled as though she were suffering mortal agony—and then all was still! With a smile upon her lips, as radiant, as loving, as innocent as that sweet face had ever worn in the heyday of life and health, the gentle Zuleika died. Seymour threw himself frantically upon the pale, cold corpse of her he had loved so well, and gave full vent to his grief. His bosom heaved, and his frame shook with the intensity of his emotions. The strong man wept in his agony!

CHAPTER XXXVIII

The last of Zuleika—Her Burial on the Island, and the Departure of Seymour and Jane Miller for Odessa, on board the Petrel.

"My hair is gray; but not with years."

Prisoner of Chillon.

THROUGHOUT that sorrowful day Seymour sat by the side of the corpse of his adored Zuleika, alone, for he refused to be comforted. The wound in his arm, though severe, was not dangerous, and it had been carefully dressed by some of the Greek women of the island, who generally practised what little surgery and medical duty was required, and usually with success; but he heeded not the pain of the wound; even had it been ten times more painful, he would not have felt it. Jane Miller and Marie Wilson, and Captain De Sylva, each and all strove to administer comfort to him; but in vain. He at first listened with apparent patience; but with his thoughts in reality dwelling upon other topics, until at length he sternly, almost savagely, desired them to leave the apartment. They complied, and he locked door and closed the shutters, and then turning himself upon the bed beside the dead bodies of his wife and child, he thus remained until night and through the night until the morning again broke, and his friends having grown alarmed at the silence that prevailed in that dark, closed, desolate apartment, forced open the door.

What thoughts had passed through the mind of the mourner during that long period of intense grief, no one knew, no one

can ever know. De Sylva entered and found him kneeling by the side of the bed, the fair hand of his wife, now rigid and cold in death, clasped in his own so tightly that it was with difficulty De Sylva could unloose it. Seymour at first seemed unconscious of his presence, and it was only after repeated endeavors to recall him to himself, that the grief-stricken husband allowed himself to be led from the room. His friends were terror-stricken at the change which those twenty-four hours of woe had made in his appearance. His sable hair was strewn with threads of grey; his face was haggard; his athletic form seemed to have lost all its vigor and elasticity, and his clear, olive, richly sunburnt complexion had become sallow. Twenty years seemed during the course of that one day and night to have been added to his life. On the day before he was the beau ideal of a handsome man, in the full prime and vigor of manhood; now he presented the appearance of a man far advanced into middle life, with a shattered constitution and a debilitated frame.

Sunken into despondency, he barely replied to the few necessary questions that were addressed to him, and shrunk alike from observation and sympathy. But he did not attempt to enter the chamber of death again—and when De Sylva, and Jane Miller—who had been under the necessity of explaining to the young Portuguese the apparent mystery of her presence, with as much delicacy as possible—hinted the necessity of making preparations for the funeral, he made no objections. He left all to them, and seemed only desirous to be left alone to the indulgence of his silent and painful reveries.

The negro nurse, assisted by Jane Miller, proceeded to arrange the corpses of the young mother and her child for interment. Poor Julia had been forgotten amidst the terrific events of the late deadly struggle, but she had heard the approach of the pirates, before Zuleika's ear had caught the sound of their footsteps. She had risen from her bed and gone out to reconnoitre, and being afraid to enter the cottage again after it was surrounded by the armed band; she had concealed herself amongst the shrubbery and there had been a witness of the strife.

But the negress had been fondly attached to her mistress and the infant, and with the peculiar characteristic of her race, she had, since Zuleika and her child's deaths, given way to boistrous, uncontrollable grief.

With sobs and lamentations, loud and long, she assisted Jane

in the mournful task. The carpenter of the Petrel was instructed to make the coffin, and by nightfall of that day, everything was arranged for the funeral. Seymour was informed of this, and then, for the first time since he had been led from the room in the morning, he expressed his desire once again to look upon the remains of his wife and child, before they were committed to the grave.

He was led into the room by De Sylva, who requested Jane Miller to be at hand, as he expected another frantic display of grief.

But he was agreeably disappointed.

Seymour approached the coffin, stooped down and kissed the cold cheek of the infant as it lay upon its mother's bosom, and then imprinting another long, lingering kiss upon the pale lips of Zuleika, he took her hand in his, and whispered, as though she could hear him :

"I will remember!"

Then turning to De Sylva, he said, calmly.

"Lead me from the room—I feel weak and faint."

De Sylva led him from the apartment.

"All is ready for the funeral," said he, "are you willing that it should take place to-night?"

"Yes, to-night," replied Seymour.

"Several of the matrons and maidens of the island desire once more to look upon the remains of her they have learned to love so well; and old Otho is here, he would like to see 'his lady,' as he calls her, again—are you willing they should be admitted?"

"Yes," replied Seymour, in the same cold, apathetic tone of voice.

The Greek women and old Otho were admitted. The girls had brought handfulls of sweet wild flowers with which they strewed the bier, and almost covered the bodies it contained, and then one by one they kissed Zuleika's brow, which they bathed in tears, unable to control the warm impulses of their ardent natures. Old Otho was the last who approached the corpse; he took Zuleika's hand in his own, and then, raising his trembling right hand to heaven, he muttered almost inaudibly, some Greek words, then letting his arm fall, laid his hand upon his heart, exclaiming—

"All is peace!"

He was led by De Sylva from the room, and the bearers arrived to carry the coffin to the grave. The carpenter screwed

down the lid, and assisted by De Sylva, bore it to the outside of the cottage. The bearers who had volunteered, were six young Greek girls, who placed their kerchiefs beneath the bier, and holding either end, walked three on each side. There was no pall, nor any inscription upon the coffin; a bunch of white flowers alone bedecked the bier; a red poppy was intertwined with the bouquet, to signify that the deceased had died a violent death; but Jane Miller desired its removal. She wished to associate no ideas of violence with the last of one so innocent and beautiful as Zuleika, and her desire was readily complied with. Indeed, it was she who took upon herself with a calmness and assiduity that attracted the admiration of all, the entire arrangement of the melancholy cortege. There was no priest on the island, and old Otho—now nearly blind, and so decrepid that he was obliged to be supported by two stout Greek youths, offered to recite the prayers of the Greek church (from memory) over the grave; Seymour followed immediately behind the bier, supported by De Sylva, then followed Jane and Marie, then the negress Julia, and behind them a procession of Greek men, women, and youths of both sexes, comprising almost all the inhabitants of the island.

The Greek girls chanted a mournful dirge as the cortege wended slowly along the margin of the beach, to the spot where the wild surf broke unceasingly against the rock-bound coast, making that melancholy music which Zuleika had so much delighted to listen to.

There, far above high-water mark, in a cypress grove, beneath the overhanging cliffs, whence, in this spot, probably in consequence of some convulsion of nature which had occurred centuries ago, the waters had receded, leaving a long, deep beach, fringed close beneath the cliffs with sombre evergreens, the grave had been prepared at Jane Miller's desire, in consequence of Zuleika having one day observed that if she were to die upon the island, it was near this spot she would wish to be buried.

The coffin was lowered into the lonely grave, and the sandy soil was thrown upon it, until it was filled up—while the voice of old Otho, reciting the funeral prayers of his church, was heard above the deep voice of the sea and the hollow sound of the falling clods of earth.

The mournful ceremony was over, and slowly, in little saddened groups, the islanders departed to their homes. But Seymour now threw himself upon the grave, and again gave vent

to the violence of his grief, so long suppressed. He called wildly upon Zuleika to awaken from her sleep—to come forth from the grave to speak to him ; to visit him again in form or in spirit—not to forsake him for ever. Jane Miller and Marie became alarmed at the violence of his emotion, and De Sylva sat down beside him, and strove, for a long time in vain, to comfort him. At length he succeeded. The strange apathy which had followed the first violent outburst of grief, again took possession of him, and he allowed De Sylva and Jane to lead him towards the cottage of the poor fisherman ; and the grave of Zuleika was left to the wild, savage solitude of nature. The hollow winds whistled over it ;—above it the sea-bird whirled its flight and screamed its discordant notes ; and the moaning surf, beating upon the rocks near by, sung a perpetual requiem.

Another and another day dawned upon Zuleika's Isle, no longer graced by the gentle being whose name it bore, but bearing within its bosom her mortal remains, there to rest in peace till the day of resurrection. Seymour had fallen into a state of stupor, which alarmed his friends. At Jane Miller's urgent request, seconded by Marie, and by the promptings of his own generous nature, De Sylva delayed the departure of the Petrel for several days after his new spars had been made and his vessel repaired, although he was anxious to proceed on his voyage. Jane was fearful, and not without reason, that when the remnant of the pirate crew reached the body of the fleet, after their ill-starred expedition, they would seek revenge, and again visit the island in overpowering numbers, and she was anxious to quit it as soon as possible—anxious again to revisit her home, and her mother and brother—growing more and more anxious every day. But daily did Seymour visit the grave of his beloved wife, and spend hour after hour vainly calling upon her to come back to him—entreating her not to leave him to anguish and despair. His friends grew alarmed for his reason ; and De Sylva at last thought of carrying him away by force.

One evening, he, for the first time since Zuleika's death, contrived to interest him in conversation. It was his last hope. He had resolved, on the morrow, to leave the island, and to take with him to Odessa, Seymour, Jane and the negress, trusting to circumstances with regard to their future movements ; but upon this evening Seymour appeared willing to con-

verse, and De Sylva adroitly turned the subject of conversation to the future prospects of Jane Miller.

"Jane is anxious to reach her home again, poor girl!" said he; "and you, Captain Seymour, it were well if you sought some other scene, where you might in time learn to resign yourself to your loss."

"It is irreparable," replied Seymour.

"So it is. Still, it is vain to repine for that which cannot be helped. I am going to sail for Odessa to-morrow morning; let us all go together. When you arrive there we can consult as to what course is best to pursue. You can go back with me to my own country, or can probably procure a passage for yourself and Jane to America."

"I shall not return to America," interrupted Seymour.

"Then you can go to England or France, or where you will. But recollect your promise to Jane Miller, that you would see that she returned home to her mother."

"I will go with you," said Seymour, suddenly arousing himself, as it were, from his torpidity—as though some new idea had struck him. "I will go with you; to-morrow, do you say you sail? Well, be it so; the sooner the better. Let it be to-morrow. But is Jane Miller prepared?"

"She is ready at any moment. I have requested Marie to speak with her. She has entered into all our arrangements.

Once possessed with the new idea that seemed suddenly to have occupied his mind, Seymour displayed much of his wonted alacrity. He made all ready for his departure; saw old Otho, and arranged for his future support, and engaged a Greek woman to attend upon him—and then took an affectionate farewell of the old man, whose sand of life was fast running out.

"Otho—good old man," said he—"you will in all probability meet the spirit of my sainted Zuleika in heaven ere long, while I must still wander a desolate outcast upon earth. But tell her, if beatified spirits are permitted to hold converse together, and to speak of things of earth; tell her that I will remember her parting request—my last silent promise. Farewell—pray for me, that some day I may meet you in that happier abode."

De Sylva, Jane, Marie and Seymour, since the destruction of the cottage, had made the humble cabin of the fisherman their residence; him, Seymour handsomely remunerated; he

also provided for the widow and children of the fisherman whose life had been lost in the defence of the cottage, and made presents of trifling worth—yet still valuable to the poor, simple Greeks, to all the inhabitants of the island—presents that would be of benefit to them, and at the same time serve as *souvenirs* of her whose memory he hoped would ever be cherished by them.

The day was far advanced before all these arrangements were completed. In the evening Seymour seemed livelier than he had been since Zuleika's death. The prospect of change appeared to have planted fresh hope in his heart, and after an evening of pleasant, though subdued conversation, he and his friends retired to rest. It was the last time they would sleep in a place embittered to them by such painful recollections.

On the morrow De Sylva rose early, and going on board his brig, ordered the mate to get everything in readiness for sailing.

He then returned on shore for the purpose of taking his passengers on board. Jane Miller and Marie and the negress were ready; but Seymour had not made his appearance. Jane had knocked at the door of his room, but no answer had been returned and the women were beginning to feel alarmed.

When De Sylva was informed of this, he entered the sleeping chamber. It was empty—and more than that, Seymour's bed had not been slept in on the previous night.

At first a suspicion that the unhappy man had committed suicide flashed upon the mind of De Sylva—and then the idea struck him that he might, perhaps, be found at the grave of his wife. He hastened thither, taking Jane Miller, to whom he had imparted his suspicions, with him.

When they reached the spot, their minds were much relieved on witnessing the object of their search seated on the little mound, which, planted with grass seed, had been raised over the grave of the mother and child. A white rose bush which Jane recognized as having once been a favorite plant of Zuleika's, and from which she had been wont to pluck the flowers to adorn her hair, had been newly planted on the grave, and Seymour was sitting with his head resting upon his hand, so earnestly contemplating the rose bush, that he did not observe the approach of his visitors until they were close upon him.

"All is ready for sea, on board the Petrel, Captain Seymour," said De Sylva. "We have been looking for you, and Jane, here, got frightened on finding that you had not slept in your bed last night."

"Here, on this grave, has my last night in Zuleika's Isle been passed," replied Seymour. "I went to the garden and dug up this rose bush, after we parted last night, and brought it here and planted it. It was a favorite plant of Zuleika's, and it is emblematical of her own innocence. I had thought to have spent the last night in vigils over her tomb; but I have been sleeping for hours—and *she* and our babe have appeared to me in my dreams. They smiled sweetly, and Zuleika said she was happy—and bade me remember my promise to her. I awoke and registered a vow, before heaven, that I would not forget it; nor will I. I had forgotten that the hour of embarkation drew near, or I would not have kept you waiting. I will pluck one white rose from the tree and wear it next my heart, for Zuleika's sake; and then I will bid farewell for ever to the spot, and the precious dust it contains, and be with you."

He plucked the flower as he spoke, and casting a lingering look upon the grave, rose from the sod and accompanied De Sylva and Jane to the cabin of the fisherman. They found Marie and the negress awaiting them, and together they proceeded to the boat that was to carry them on board the Petrel.

In half an hour's space the Petrel was under weigh, and with a fine fresh breeze was running along the shore of the island, which was lined with the honest, simple inhabitants, who cheered the wanderers on their way, and bestowed blessings innumerable upon Seymour, in return for the few kind offices he had done them since he had chosen (unluckily) this island for his young wife's abode.

Jane and Seymour stood upon the raised poop of the brig, until the last faint shadow of the land was no longer visible, and then the former retired to the cabin occupied by Marie; but Seymour sat on the taffrail, with his eyes turned in the direction of the land long after it had sunk below the horizon. The seamen passed to and fro busily engaged in their duties, but he heeded them not; he heard not the orders given by the captain and the mate, as alternately they relieved each other in the occupation of the quarter deck. The day passed away, and already the first watch of the evening had commenced, and his reveries had not been disturbed, for De Sylva knew well that it was better that his passenger should be left uninterruptedly in communication with his own thoughts; but when the hour of supper arrived, he touched him gently on the shoulder.

"Come, Captain Seymour," said he, "supper awaits us in the cabin; come down and join Jane and Marie and me there. We have left you undisturbed to your reveries all day; but you must be hungry and weary now, so come below."

"The island has disappeared beneath the horizon?" said Seymour, in an absent manner, and yet half interrogatively.

"Hours ago," replied De Sylva.

"And yet, until you touched me just now, I fancied I saw it still. I seemed to wake to your touch, and the shadow disappeared."

"You saw it merely in your imagination," answered De Sylva. "Come, come away below. Marie and Jane are growing impatient. The former has called us half a dozen times; come, recollect you have had no dinner."

Seymour suffered himself to be led below to the cabin, where, after he had partaken of the food that had been prepared, he laid down upon the sofa locker, and fell asleep, for his mind and body were alike worn and wearied.

The Petrel met with no adventure of moment during the remainder of her passage through the Dardanelles and the still narrower channel of the Bosphorus, and within a week after passing the latter, she entered the port of Odessa. A caravan was on the point of starting overland to Moscow, at the time of their arrival, and Seymour hearing this, resolved to go with it. He had no passport, but he had money, and that will buy or break passports, or do anything else in Russia; powerful, as it everywhere is, there it is all-powerful. So soon as it was ascertained that he had wealth, his purposes were no longer questioned; he fed the governor, and the deputy governor, and half a dozen subordinates military and civic, and a passport was forged for him, and he was desired to hold himself in readiness to start with the caravan on the following morning. He stated the object he had in view in undertaking this journey to no one, further than telling Jane Miller and De Sylva that he hoped the change of scene and the new mode of travel would serve to divert his mind from brooding over his sad loss; and placing sufficient funds in the hands of Jane to enable her to meet abundantly all the expenses she might find it necessary to incur in order to reach home; and thanking De Sylva for his kindness, in few words, but with a warm pressure of the hand, and bidding farewell to Marie, he left them, and they saw him no more, though he was subsequently heard of by them.

It was arranged that Jane should stay with Marie, who, like herself, was a fugitive from home, and return with De Sylva to Oporto, from which port he promised to procure her a passage to New York; and here for the present shall we leave them, and return to the history of those other personages who have figured in our narrative, whose existence the reader will begin to think we have forgotten.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Which treats of various Characters—and Commences to wind up the Story.

SOME months after the occurrence of the events described in the preceding chapter, the widow Miller was seated with her son at breakfast in the parlor of the little cottage in New Jersey. Tom was reading the newspaper aloud to his mother, occasionally stopping to sip his coffee, for he had already finished the substantial portion of his breakfast, when the knock of the postman was heard at the door, and shortly afterwards the servant maid entered the parlor with a letter addressed to Mr. Thomas Miller. Tom received the letter from the hands of the servant, and breaking open the seal commenced to peruse it. Something peculiar in the handwriting or something remarkable in the contents seemed to startle him, for he sprang up from his chair, and the blood rushed from his cheeks, leaving his face pale and colorless; while, although not subject to nervousness, his hands trembled so much that he could scarcely read the letter.

"What is the matter my dear?" asked the widow. "Have you any bad news in that letter?"

"No—mother—oh, no"—stammered the youth.

"Then you must be unwell, for you tremble as if you had an ague fit, and your face is as pale as that of a corpse."

"Yes—I mean—no, mother, I am quite well—but—there is no bad news in the letter. On the contrary, good news. Still, it has taken me unawares. I will retire to my own room and finish its perusal, and then I will explain."

"You are ordered away to sea again," said the widow, in a tone of alarm. "Surely, they might give you longer leave of absence, after having been so long away from me."

"No, mother. This letter has no reference to the Service," said the youth; "but—I cannot explain now. You shall know all; you shall read it yourself, by and by."

Thus speaking, he left the parlor and proceeded to his bedroom, where he finished the perusal of the letter which had so much surprised and startled him.

It was from his sister Jane. She had reached Oporto in safety in the *Petrel*, and thence had taken her passage to New York, at which place she had arrived but a few hours previous to writing the letter, which was dated from the ——— Hotel in Broadway. The letter was brief; but it said enough to account for much of the mystery which Tom had hitherto been unable to penetrate. It stated that she had made inquiry immediately upon her arrival with regard to her mother's present place of residence, and had learned that she still lived near Jersey City. She had also learned that her brother was at home, and she had thought it advisable that he should call upon her at the hotel before she went home, in order that he might be able to break the news of her arrival to her mother. She made brief allusion to the visit of the young midshipman to Annabon, and explained the nature of the letter which in a state of nervous excitement she had sent him by the hand of Miss Herbert.

It was little wonder the young man was agitated, and that his hand trembled and his pulse beat rapidly, and his cheeks alternately flushed and turned pale; but, having read the letter, he resolved to visit the hotel and see his long-lost sister before he explained the nature of the news he had received to his mother.

Hastily preparing himself for the walk, he re-entered the parlor where the widow was still sitting, anxiously awaiting his return, and pondering over the probable nature of the news which had so agitated her son.

"Mother," said he, "I must go over to New York, immediately. I shall not be long absent, and when I return, I will show you the letter I have received."

"Why not now, Tom?" said Mrs. Miller, "surely there is some bad news. My boy, you are ordered to sea again?"

"I do not know that I ought to consider that bad news," said Tom, smilingly—"though I should be sorry to leave you soon, as I expect to be at home at least six months; but, set your mind at ease on that score. The letter, as I have already said, does not relate to me personally at all; and so far from

being the bearer of bad news, the intelligence it contains, will, if I mistake not, gladden your heart."

"Then, why not satisfy me now, Tom?" reiterated the widow.

"I wish to be sure that the good news is true first, mother."

"Is it anything about Jane?" asked the widow, her voice trembling as she spoke, and her countenance assuming an expression of intense anxiety.

"Dear mother, wait until I return, and then you shall know all," replied Tom; "Good by, I shall be back before dinner-time:" and, without giving the anxious widow time to put any more questions, he left the parlor, and the next minute was hurrying towards the ferry.

Mrs. Miller was fain to content herself with his promise to return speedily, and communicate to her the gratifying intelligence he alluded to.

"What *can* it be?" said she to herself, as, after he had gone, she sat down on the sofa, and fell into a brown study; "I should be certain it was an appointment to some ship, if Tom had not told me positively it was not, and I know he would not tell me a falsehood. Can he have heard anything with regard to Jane? No: poor, dear girl," and the widow shook her head, and a tear rolled down her cheek, as she thought of her lost daughter. "No: I shall never hear anything of poor Jane, again. I wonder now," thought the widow, in her simplicity and her ignorance with regard to nautical matters, and the slow progress of promotion in Uncle Sam's national marine—"I wonder, now, whether Tom hasn't done something or other very gallant and brave, while he was away at sea, which he has been too modest and bashful to tell me of?" (Oh! Widow Miller, Widow Miller—*your* son, Tom, too modest and bashful! Those are failings or virtues, call them which you please, that your darling son is not troubled with.) "I shouldn't wonder, now, if he has," repeated the widow, "and they're going to make a lieutenant of him, right away. He'll buy himself a pair of epaulettes, if it is so, before he returns home, and present himself to me in his new finery; that's it, depend upon it," and the widow roused herself from her brown study, confident in her own mind that she had shrewdly fathomed the mystery of her son's behavior, and set herself to work at the daily routine of her domestic duties.

Meanwhile Tom reached New York, and hastened to the

Hotel. It was a moment of intense feeling to him, that moment, when, led by the waiter, he tapped at the door of the room occupied by his sister. A voice—a voice he readily recognized, albeit it sounded somewhat tremulous and husky, bade him enter. He turned the handle of the door ; it swung open. He stood in the room—in the presence of his long-lost sister.

“Tom, dear Tom!” she exclaimed, and rushed into his arms, hanging about his neck, as though she were fearful she should lose him again.

“Dear, dear Janel!” answered Tom, from the innermost depths of his heart. It was all he could say ; and his manhood forsook him, and he sobbed aloud. For some moments the brother and sister clung speechless in each other’s embrace, mingling each other’s tears. Then came the explanation. Jane confessed how she had become foolishly infatuated with Seymour, at the same time exonerating him from all blame ; for though he had shown a marked partiality for her society, he had not spoken of love. The interview at Annabon was talked over, and an hour had elapsed before the re-united brother and sister thought of the flight of time. Then Jane besought her brother to carry her to her mother.

“Will *she* forgive me, Tom?” she asked. “Will *she* not be angry with me for leaving her in the unnatural manner I did?”

“She will,” replied Tom. “Dear Jane you know not how deeply she has mourned over your supposed death. How she has longed for some token that she might always wear about her to remind her of you. For a long time she wore a ring, supposed to have been that given to you by Captain Seymour, and found upon the finger of a floating corpse, in the Hudson, which we all imagined to be your mortal remains ; but lately we have discovered that the corpse was that of a young lady of the name of Donaldson, who with her father was upset from a boat in the Hudson about the period of your disappearance. Since then our mother has restored it to the aunt of the poor young lady, who, by the way, is a relative of Captain Seymour’s. All this I will explain to you another time. Now, dear, get ready, and I will hire a carriage, and we will go home together. How rejoiced our mother will be when we arrive.”

“Then she knows not of my return?” said Jane.

“No,” replied her brother, “I thought it advisable to keep her in ignorance of the contents of the letter until I had seen you. Such strange events ; such apparent mysteries have tran-

spired, that, until I saw you with my own eyes, I refused to credit even the assertions in your own handwriting."

The carriage was brought to the door of the hotel, and the brother and sister entered and were driven rapidly to Jersey City. They reached the cottage and the carriage stopped opposite the gate.

"Stay inside, Jane," said Tom. "I will go in and break the intelligence of your return to our mother," and he alighted from the carriage and opened the gate. Mrs. Miller had heard the approach of the carriage wheels, and had opened the door of the cottage herself, anticipating her son's return.

He came not with the new epaulettes of the lieutenant's grade upon his shoulders, as the widow had so simply anticipated, and in answer to her question whether he had obtained promotion, for she still adhered to the fancy she had conceived, he replied :

"No matter; I told you that the letter had no reference to me. Come into the parlor," and taking her by the arm he led her into the room.

"Mother," he said, "I have all along told you that I did not believe Jane was dead, or had even left us for ever. I said she would some day return to gladden us."

"Then it was of Jane that letter told?" almost screamed the widow.

"It was."

"And you have heard news of her?"

"I have."

"Tell me, Tom, my son, tell me at once. I can bear it. She is well?"

"She is well, and I have seen her."

The widow gave vent to a piercing shriek and fainted in the arms of her son, who led her to the sofa and carefully rested her upon it.

Jane had heard that shriek, and unable to contain herself any longer, she had alighted from the carriage—opened the gate of the avenue which led to the cottage—rushed up the gravel walk—entered the cottage, and in another moment was kneeling by the prostrate form of her mother.

In the course of a few moments the widow began to show symptoms of recovery. "Was it a dream?" she said, passing her hand across her brow, "or did they tell me Jane had returned?"

She opened her eyes and beheld both her children bending

over her. Her emotions again overpowered her—excess of joy is more prostrating than excess of grief—and she closed her eyes and relapsed into unconsciousness; but she lay in this condition but for a few moments. Again she opened her eyes, gazed earnestly upon her children, as if to assure herself that it was indeed their loved faces she saw bending over her; her lips moved as if in prayer, and then she exclaimed aloud as tears rushed to her relief and gushed from her eyes :

“Thank God! she that was lost is found. He hath restored my child to me again.”

She clasped the returned prodigal in her embrace, and the long separated mother and daughter mingled their tears together, while both were speechless from excess of emotion. Tom stood aside, and turned away his head, unable to witness the happy greeting.

By and by, the re-united family became more composed, and when able to control their feelings, the long story of Jane's mysterious absence was told. So passed the remainder of that happy day, in the family of the widow Miller. Jane felt a delicacy in meeting with those she had known before she left home. She felt no particular friendship for them, for she had, in consequence of her poverty, been treated by them with neglect and contumely, and Mrs. Miller, whose circumstances were now comparatively easy, resolved to remove to a distant place, and at Tom's suggestion, it was determined that the family should pay a visit to Camden, where his old shipmate Frank Martin and—his sister, Sarah, lived.

Leaving them, for the present, to prosecute their journey, let us revert to Mr. Mordant and his family, whom we have for some time lost sight of.

From the hour when the fortunes of Mr. Mordant reached their culminating point; and the loss of the *Dolphin* and the *Albatross*; the elopement of his daughter with the music master; the discovery of the fraud with regard to Mrs. Miller's estate; the reckless and scandalous behavior of his son, and various other minor matters, all rushing, crowding upon him at once, with the terrible and irresistible power of an avalanche, this gentleman, who had so long held a position of eminence in the fashionable and influential circles of the city, felt that one after another the stilts which had supported him were giving way. His wealth had been great; but it had, in consequence of unsuccessful speculations, he had entered into unadvisedly with the hope of repairing the damages that his fortune had sustained, become

less and less, and he foresaw that unless he retired with the remnant of his fortune, he stood a good chance of losing it all. He had been compelled to pay ten thousand dollars to Mr. Dixon, the father of the girl whom his son Charles had so basely betrayed, or sought to betray, though he had, happily for the young woman, been deceived. He had again been compelled largely to fee parties at Sierra Leone, who were conscious of his derelictions. Mr. Harvey had absconded with a large amount of his money which he held in trust, after having pretty well feathered his nest with pickings from the merchant's pockets, in the way of *legitimate* business, and the last that was heard of him he was in Europe, living on the Continent in great style. Charles Mordant had contracted new debts, not in the most honorable manner, which the father, to preserve his own waning reputation, was compelled to pay. Miss Dixon, as we will still call her, for she was Charles Mordant's wife only in name, had succeeded in obtaining a divorce, and, to hush up the prejudicial reports which would otherwise have got abroad, the merchant was compelled to pay down handsomely to lawyers of low reputation, and reporters, editors, and others, of still lower. To save his daughter's elopement from involving him in disgrace, he had been compelled to take her home, and to pay the music-master liberally, and provide him with a situation to insure his secrecy; for, although this scoundrel was obliged to keep out of the way, in order to evade the stern penalty of the laws he had outraged, he had the effrontery to threaten his father-in-law with exposure, aye, and would have had the hardihood to expose him, too, had his threats been unheeded. All these, and other misfortunes, had compelled Mr. Mordant to give up business while he had any business left to give up, and to retire to a small estate in the West, which he purchased with the remnant of his fortune, where, for the remainder of his life, he will probably languish in obscurity and comparative poverty.

His second daughter, educated after a similar fashion, and possessed with the same romantic sentiments as her sister, failed to take warning by her, and married a quack doctor and itinerant lecturer, who happened to visit the village where the broken-down merchant had located himself; and with him she went still further West, and has not since been heard of. Charles Mordant, his father having refused, actually because he was no longer able, to supply his extravagances, at last persuaded the old gentleman to raise him sufficient money to carry him to

California, where, shortly after his arrival there, he perished in a drunken brawl in San Francisco. Sarah is still at home; and, having learned experience from her former misfortunes, she promises yet to retrieve herself, if she can only escape from the meshes in which, by her false step, she has entangled herself. She devotes herself to the household duties of the farm; and, being a really good-looking girl, a wealthy though uneducated young farmer of the vicinity has fallen over head and ears in love with her. He knows nothing of her former history, and was somewhat taken aback when, upon making her an offer of his heart and hand, he received a respectful refusal, for he feels confident she loves him—and so she does, in truth; and should any lucky chance put an end to the career of her rascally and dissipated husband, she will, no doubt, eventually accept the hand of the honest farmer.

As to Mrs. Mordant, she sits day after day, the whole live-long day, in a rocking-chair, brooding upon the misfortunes that have befallen her family, and laying all the blame upon her husband, who, poor man, leads a wretched life, troubled as he is with the reproaches of his wife, as well as with the small, still, yet constantly reproving voice of his own conscience. He thought he was making a great figure in the world, and so he was; but when his affairs begun to assume a downward tendency, and his former friends found that he was no longer possessed of the wealth he once had, it was astonishing how soon he was forgotten. So far from being the pillar of society he vainly imagined himself to be, he found that he was not missed from the structure when he was compelled to withdraw himself, and that his very existence was forgotten. He is just beginning to see the folly, wickedness, and vanity of his past career—beginning to see it at a late period of life, certainly; still, let us hope he will benefit by the retrospect. Here we will leave him to that painful retrospect, and, we trust, to repentance.

Mrs. Miller and her son and daughter visited Camden, as we have stated was their intention. The place so pleased the widow, who found an agreeable companion in Mrs. Martin, that she determined to sell her property in New Jersey, and purchase a farm near that occupied by the Martins. She was much influenced in this matter by her son, who has fallen deeply in love with Sarah Martin. Sarah, too, reciprocates the affections of the young sailor, and, on his return from his present cruise to the Japanese Islands, she is to become his wife.

We have mentioned that a divorce from Charles Mordant

had been obtained by Miss Dixon, and shortly afterwards, at the request of Mrs. Martin, the request being urged at the instance of her son, she paid a visit to Camden, and she and Frank Martin, who is now a steady farmer, were very soon engaged to each other. Frank said he needed a wife to manage the domestic duties of the farm, and, as he would brook no delay, they were married within three months after the visit was made, and on the same day William Martin and Jessica Deane were united.

William is settled near Augusta, where he has gone into business on his own account, and promises one day to become a thriving lawyer.

Mrs. Donaldson, who we hinted had learned that the drowned female, found floating in the Hudson, and supposed to be Jane Miller, was her unfortunate niece, and who was satisfied that her brother had likewise perished, is still living at Camden, and has made a will, bequeathing all her large property to William, Frank, and Sarah Martin, her grand nephews and niece—thus, when she dies, they will be amongst the wealthiest families in the State of Maine.

As to Jane Miller, she has declared her intention never to marry. It is evident to her friends that she was really strongly attached to Seymour: and in spite of all that has passed—in spite of her knowledge of his character, and the hopelessness of her love, she cannot efface his image from her memory. The scene she witnessed on Zuleika's Isle had a marked influence upon her. She is inclined to melancholy, and is fond of walking alone on the sea-shore and brooding over past recollections. It has, however, been noticed that she has of late been joined in her walks, as it were, accidentally, by a young physician, who has lately commenced practice in the vicinity, and who has a strange fancy for gathering sea shells, just at the hour when Jane wanders on the beach. He has been instructing her in the science of conchology, and there are shrewd whispers abroad that she is an apt pupil, and is also taking lessons from the same gentleman in another science. We should not at all wonder if before long Jane Miller became Mrs. Doctor ———— somebody. We won't say whom.

Captain De Sylva made a successful market at Odessa and a quick passage home to Oporto; and on his arrival home he introduced Marie to his parents. We are not in the secret with regard to what happened on the passage home, or as to where the courtship commenced; but a fortnight after the ar-

rival of the Petrel at Oporto, Dom Sébastian De Sylva and Mademoiselle Marie Wilson were made man and wife at the Cathedral of Oporto.

We learnt the news through a letter which was received by her sister Louise, in which she mentions how happy she is, and how dearly she loves her generous husband, and she also invites her sister to visit her in Portugal. Her husband has left the sea, and she says he has promised to make the tour of Europe with her. She wishes her sister to accompany her, and Louise is inclined to do so ; but at present she is unable, as her guardian keeps her very close. However, his health is failing, and should he die, she will be her own mistress, and the possessor of great wealth. Then she has resolved to visit her sister, and has written her to that effect. Captain De Sylva blesses the hour when he fell in with his Marie on the doorstep of the hotel, on that stormy night, at New Orleans. They have given Julia, Zuleika's old nurse, a home with them.

For a long time after the return of her daughter, it remained a mystery to Mrs. Miller as to who was the author of the anonymous letters she received at different times after her daughter's disappearance ; but the mystery was at length unravelled. A letter, which, shortly after the family had quitted New Jersey, had been sent to the cottage in which they had lived, was forwarded to their new abode in Camden. It was in the well remembered handwriting of the anonymous scribe, who requested an interview with Mrs. Miller or one of her family. She stated that she was dying of consumption in the New York Hospital, and no time was to be lost if they wished to hear further from her.

Young Miller was in the city of New York on his way to join the ship, in Commodore Perry's squadron, to which he had been appointed, and he paid a visit to the hospital and asked for the inmate, who had in her last letter signed herself " Mary Edwards."

He found her in the ward appropriated to persons suffering from consumptive complaints.

" You are the son of Mrs. Miller, and brother of Jane Miller, who disappeared from home some time since?" said she.

" I am," replied Tom.

" I am dying," said the poor girl, " but before I die I wish to clear up that which otherwise may remain a painful mystery. I am the daughter of a farmer who resided in New Jersey—where, I will not say—it does not matter. I met with Captain

Seymour in New York, and, attracted by his many fascinations, I fell in love with him, madly, hopelessly. I knew this from the first—that is to say, from the first time I was so weak as to let him perceive that I loved him ; still I could not leave him ; I haunted his footsteps ; I followed him and watched him when he knew not that I was near ; I witnessed his attentions to your sister, and the thought that he loved her maddened me ; I saw them together the day previous to her departure from home ; I was concealed in the grove where they were walking, and I heard all that passed ; I knew *then* that Seymour did *not* love Jane Miller ; still he did not love me, and I hated her to whom he showed so much more attention : I watched her closely, and knew of her disguise ; I could have betrayed her, but I did not, because I hoped Seymour would, and so I should be revenged. I was driven to insanity, and in that state I penned those letters, scarcely knowing what I wrote, or what was my object, unless it was to make others as wretched as myself. I wished to render her miserable, and at the same time to detach her from Seymour. Since that time I have lived a life of poverty, earning my bread as a seamstress, until the disease, which months ago attacked me, rendered me powerless to earn it any longer. Then I was admitted here. I shall not live through another day. I feel that my last hour is drawing near, and I have long felt that I could not die happily, unless I had unburthened my mind of this deceit.”

The poor girl fell back upon her pillow exhausted, and deeply moved with the distress he had witnessed, the young midshipman left the hospital. He departed for Norfolk that evening, but before he sailed he wrote a letter to his mother and to Jane, informing them of all the unhappy girl had told him.

We have only now to relate what we know of the fate of Seymour and one or two others who have figured in our narrative, and then our task of many weeks duration will be at an end. But we shall make this relation the subject of another and a concluding chapter.

CHAPTER XL.

THE CONCLUSION.

" — But little more remains to tell,
 I've suffered—yet deserved it well—
 Scarce thirty summers yet have sped
 Their brief existence o'er my head.
 Yet, see: this premature decay,
 These sable hairs, thick strewn with gray ;
 This furrowed brow and visage pale,
 Betray, alas ! a mournful tale,
 Of passions under no control,
 All reckless in their fiery course,
 Breeding that cancer in the soul—
 The torturing demon of remorse."

[Unpublished Poem.]

SEYMOUR arrived with the caravan at Moscow ; but neither the diversity of scenery nor the change of habit were able to banish from his memory the recollection of his past career, the tragical end of his beloved Zuleika, nor the image of his child whom he had nursed in his arms in the evening, full of life and health and infantile glee, and whom in the morning he had seen a corpse. These thoughts haunted him in his waking moments and in his dreams ; night brought no rest, day no respite to his mental sufferings.

From Moscow he journeyed to St. Petersburg, and thence travelled into Austria, whence he still pursued his way southward into Italy. He had, it would seem, a purpose in view from the moment he had quitted Russia; for his journeyings thenceforward were not marked by the vascillation which had characterised them through that country. His course from St. Petersburg until he arrived at Parma, in Italy, was as direct and as rapid as he could render it.

At Parma he hired obscure lodgings, mingling neither with the inhabitants nor with the numerous foreigners who visited that city, though it was soon spread abroad that he was possessed of wealth; for the cormorants, who seek to prey upon the unwary in those cities, which are much visited by strangers, seem to have an intuitive faculty of discovering the possessors of wealth, however they may seek to hide it, as easily as the vulture scents the blood of its victims.

Seymour, however, spurned all overtures that were made to him to induce him to mingle in society, and soon finding that it

was useless to waste time upon him, he was left to himself, and forgotten.

* * * * *

About six months after his marriage to Miss Dixon, Frank Martin resolved to visit the continent of Europe with his bride, Mrs. Donaldson, who was very partial to him, amply providing him with funds for that purpose. He landed in England, thence travelled through France into Italy, stopping a few days at any city or locality famed for its historical associations, or which particularly pleased his fancy. However, as his tour was to be a brief one, he hurried to Italy, which country his wife wished particularly to visit.

They had travelled from Milan to Parma, where Mrs. Martin, feeling fatigued with her journey, expressed a wish to remain a few hours, although it had been their intention to hasten on to Florence as quickly as possible.

Leaving his wife resting upon a couch in the hotel at which they had put up, Frank strolled through the city for the purpose of amusing himself and passing away the time.

He found, however, little to attract his attention, except the churches, and of these he had seen so many, that he began to weary of them.

"Have you nothing worthy of the inspection of a traveller in this place?" he asked of a barefooted friar, who had conducted him over a cathedral.

"Signor, yes," replied the friar. "We have a monastery a mile or two beyond the gates of the city, worthy of your excellency's notice——"

"Bah! a monastery!" exclaimed Frank in a tone of disgust. "I am sick of eternally visiting monasteries and churches and convents."

"But this is worth a visit, signor," returned the friar. "The grounds are extensive and admirably laid out. Your excellency will be delighted."

"Well, then, call a carriage, and let us proceed thither," said Frank, yawning with *ennui*. "The drive will serve to pass away an hour at any rate."

In the greedy hope of extracting an additional fee from one who had already feed him so handsomely, the friar was not long in procuring a rickety conveyance, in which he and the *Ilford Americano*, as he termed his companion, proceeded to the monastery in question.

"Can we alight and walk over the grounds?" said Frank,

growing somewhat interested as they drew near the spot. "The grounds of this place do seem more interesting than those of most monasteries I have seen."

"Certainly, Excellency; by paying a fee to the porter at the gate, you can enter with me, and wander freely over the grounds. Another fee to the porter inside will procure you ready admission into the monastery."

"A fee, of course!" said Frank. "Nothing can be done here without a fee. Go ahead, then."

The entrance fee was paid. Frank and his guide alighted from the crazy vehicle which had brought them from the city, and together they walked over the grounds—the friar, though a sycophant, and little better than a mendicant, being really a very shrewd, intelligent guide, and being especially well posted upon all matters connected with the churches and religious houses.

"I should like to visit the interior of the monastery," said Frank, after they had promenaded the grounds until he began to feel weary; and on the payment of a second fee they were, as the friar had said they would be, readily admitted.

It was a stupendous, gloomy pile, and Frank soon grew tired of wandering about amongst the dark corridors, paved with stone, and having cells on either side let into the walls.

There was no variety—nothing to attract the attention, save that now and then tall, gaunt figures, wrapped in cowls and robed in gowns of coarse serge, would flit noiselessly by them, like ghosts; and Frank was on the point of leaving the place when, just as one of these ghostly objects was passing by him, in the centre of a long, dark passage, the lantern that he held in his hand disclosed such portions of his face as were not covered with the cowl.

Frank glanced at the face, and then, starting back suddenly, with difficulty suppressed an exclamation of surprise. It appeared that he, too, was noticed by the ghostly father, for the latter also started, and, crossing himself devoutly, muttered a prayer, and passed hastily into a cell, securing the door behind him.

"What is the name of that monk?" asked Frank of his conductor. "You appear to know every one here. Who is that man? I have seen his face, I think, before."

"May be, your excellency," replied the friar, who never ventured to contradict his patrons. "May be; that holy man

is called Father Georgius ; he has been here but a short time."

"What countryman is he? He is not an Italian."

"*Signor*, I do not know," replied the friar ; "I only know that he came to Parma some months since; that he lived in retirement, and that he is rich, and more than that, he has resolved to leave his wealth to the monastery, when he dies; that will not be long, for he is killing himself with mortifications and scourgings. Ah! *Signor*, truly he is a holy man!"

That was all that Frank could glean from the friar. He lingered about for sometime in hopes that the monk would again come forth from the cell, but he waited in vain, and at length getting weary and anxious to proceed on his journey, he returned to the hotel at Parma, where he had left his wife.

He told her that he had met with a priest in the monastery of Saint Giachimo, who, he could almost be certain, was Seymour, so strongly did he resemble him. "But yet it could not be," he added; "Seymour would never become a friar, besides even if he did, he would not already be honored with the appellation of 'Father,' and according to the testimony of the friar who conducted me around the place, be treated with so much respect and deference as this man is."

"It is not likely that it is Seymour," replied Mrs. Martin ; "but as to the deference with which he is treated, and the rank he holds in the monastery, the wealth—and Seymour has wealth—that can purchase indulgences, and immunities from sin—is able to accomplish anything else in this country."

Nothing further was said at the time. Frank and his wife visited Florence, and Rome, and Naples, and three months afterwards again found themselves at Parma.

"Do you know Jeannette," said Frank, after they had finished dinner at the hotel, "I have a great fancy to visit that monastery again. I cannot get the idea out of my head that that anchorite I met when we were here last was really Seymour. I should like to learn something more of him, and to see him again if possible. "Ha!" he suddenly exclaimed, "as good luck will have it, there goes the very mendicant friar who conducted me over the monastery on my last visit. Stay here, my dear, until my return. I will not be long away; but I really must visit the monastery once more," and, darting into the street, he seized the astonished friar by the the arm, and, slipping a piece of money into his hand, desired him to procure a

conveyance and again conduct him to the monastery of Saint Giachimo. Nothing loath, the friar consented ; the carriage was produced, and in the course of half an hour, Frank again stood within the walls of the venerable edifice.

"Is Father Georgius still an inmate of this monastery?" he asked of his guide ; "if so I should much like to see him, to speak with him if possible."

The friar crossed himself reverentially.

"Father Georgius has gone to heaven," he said ; "daily mortifications of the flesh, continual scourgings, and fasts, and nightly vigils, wore out the body of the holy father, who has left his wealth to the monastery and has been canonized under the name of St. Georgius ;" and as he pronounced the name, the friar made repeated crosses and genufluxions, and added—"he died in the odor of sanctity."

"But," he continued, "on the payment of a fee, you can see the relics the holy man has left behind him. They are daily visited by the faithful. One is a portrait of the Holy Virgin, set in pure gold, so beautiful that it is not believed to have been the work of mortal hands ; the other is a faded rose, which was found attached to the portrait, and both were lying beneath his robe, close to his heart. The Abbot of the monastery asserts that the rose possesses miraculous virtues, for it still preserves its fragrance, though enclosed in a glass case, which is never raised."

"I should, indeed, like to see these relics," said Frank ; and, on payment of the fee, he was allowed to visit the place where they were kept.

He doubted no longer ; the portrait of Zuleika was before him—that portrait which more than once, when a cabin boy on board the Albatross, he had seen in the possession of Seymour. Beneath it was inscribed—" *I will remember!*"

"What is the meaning of that inscription?" asked Frank of the friar.

"These were the last words the holy man uttered," was the reply.

Frank gazed long and earnestly upon the locket ; the portrait was beautiful indeed, and the original was pure as she was lovely ; but little did Seymour, little did Zuleika think, that that picture would ever be shown as the relic of a departed saint, and as a portrait of the Holy Virgin, and, as such, be visited and worshipped by thousands of devotees ; and the rose—it was a faded white rose—and strange to say, a strong per-

fume was perceptible, even through the glass case in which it was enclosed!—but Frank rightly suspected that artificial means were employed to create its seeming fragrance.

Frank left the monastery strangely impressed with what he had seen, and he obtained permission for Jeannette also to see the relics before he quitted Parma.

They returned home—and the strange story furnished matter for much interesting conversation, and led to many reminiscences of former days.

“And the rose,” said Frank one day, when he was speaking to Jane Miller on the subject, “I wonder what could have made Seymour cherish a faded white rose so fondly; or, perhaps, he did not carry it about his person; it may have been placed in the cell as a relic, by the orders of the Abbot.”

“Seymour plucked a white rose from poor Zuleika’s grave,” answered Jane, “and placed it in his bosom. I have no doubt he wore that rose next his heart until he died.”

* * * * *

Reader, we have but a few words more to add.

Shortly after Frank’s return from abroad, a man, apparently a seaman, to judge from his attire, was picked up in a state of destitution on Broadway, and carried to the Bellevue hospital. Frank was passing by at the time, happening to be then on a visit to New York; and although vice and intemperance, and disease and starvation had almost effaced the human lineaments from the man’s features, there was something in the appearance of the poor wretch that led Frank to fancy he had seen him before. He followed him to the hospital, and then he felt sure he was correct in his surmise; the man was Tolcroft, the *ci devant* mate of the Albatross. He partially revived, and lived for some hours, and Frank talked with him in his more lucid moments, and obtained much information respecting Seymour’s career from him. But he died a raving maniac, and his spirit took its departure from the body while a fearful blasphemy was still lingering upon his lips.

With a saddened heart the young man left the hospital. * *
Reader, the cabin boy has told his story.

THE END.





